THE MORGAN EPISODE IN AMERICAN FREE MASONRY

BY

STANLEY UPTON MOCK

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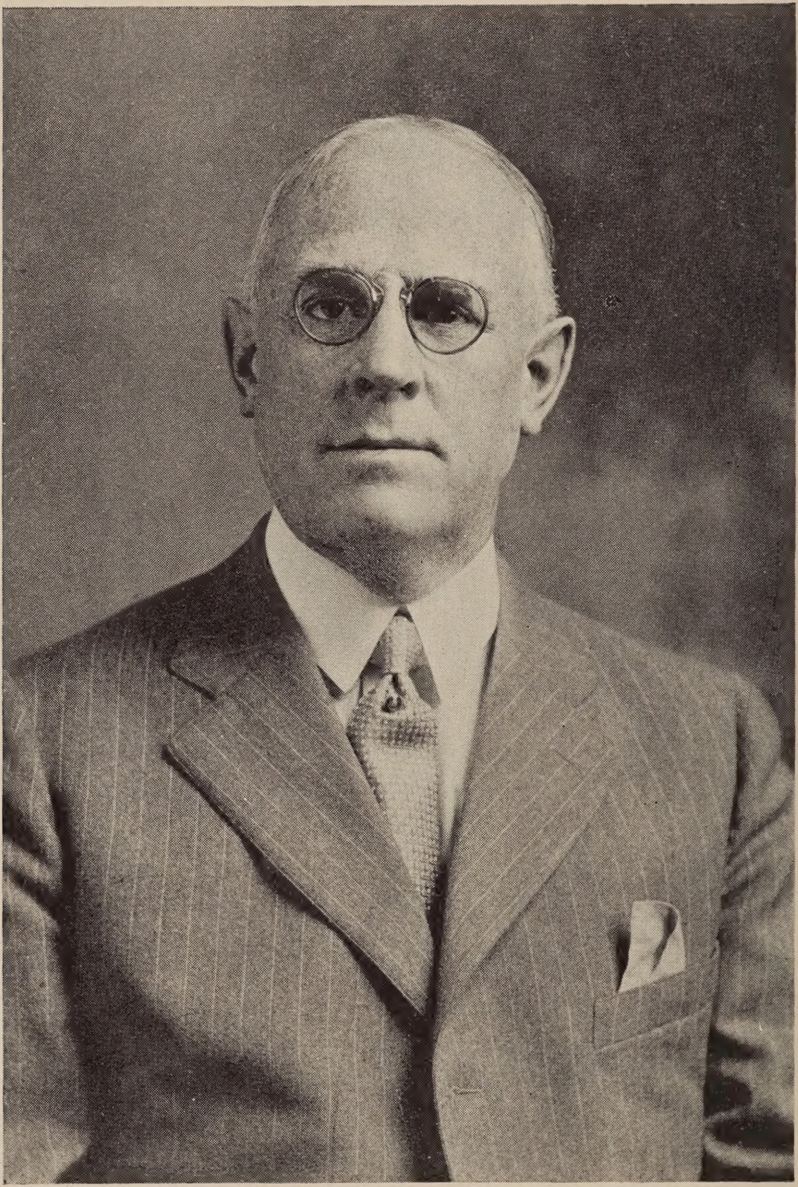

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Stanley Upton Mock

PREFACE AND PURPOSE

IT happened just one hundred and four years ago. The " Morgan Affair," all these years, has been under discussion within and without Masonic circles. Something happened in Batavia, N. Y., within Masonry which stirred up the public feelings to a high pitch, and which has been slow to die down. One Captain William A. Morgan was the chief actor. Batavia Masons were chiefly involved in the drama. They received the heaviest artillery fire from all sides. This great excitement spread like fire into all parts of the country, affecting social, political, fraternal, and religious organizations. It brought Free Masonry under heavy fire which lasted for many decades.

Because of the intense excitement, rumors were fierce and wild. Opinions varied and conclusions differed. On all sides and from every quarter came these attacks, onslaughts, and persecutions which were met largely by a silence irresistible. Nevertheless, a severe indictment still stands against Free Masonry in general, and the Batavia Masons in particular. Historians, in general, all agree in calling it the " Morgan Affair." Because of insufficient data, conclusions are for the most part incomplete, unsatisfactory, and in not a few instances, unjust. In those days the state of excitement, in New York and surrounding country, deterred all who were capable of giving to the public a true version of the affair. Even the best of men became bewildered by imbibing so many contradictory statements. There is no doubt, whatever, that there were trustworthy men then living who were capable of unraveling the whole mystery, but the excited, perverted, and frenzied state of the public mind was so intense, that no man dared make known the naked truth. Free Masonry at that time had to face the test whether it had the right to exist in and become a part of the life of our young republic. The " Morgan Affair " was that test.

The facts presented to the unbiased public mind of today are collected from reliable sources by the writer. The purpose of collecting and setting forth such facts is three-fold. ¶ First, to impart information to all fellow Masons everywhere. For in traveling about in most states of the Union the writer has found a general prevalence of ignorance on the subject among the members of the Fraternity. The " Morgan Affair " had been heard of: in general, something did happen to Morgan because he revealed the secrets of

Masonry; Batavia Masons disposed of the case, as a purely local affair, in some manner, vague and perhaps questionable; whatever was done was perhaps the best under the circumstances, and " no questions asked." But the writer found a type of Masons who are desirous of knowing the truth, and willing to let the world know the facts of the affair. Certainly the principles of Masonry, and the conduct of Masons, need not be veiled in clouds of doubt and suspicion, and should not be content to rest under a century-old indictment. Let the facts be known. Let all fellow Masons understand and appreciate the wise conduct of the brethren who had to face the issue. For these brethren fought and won the inevitable battle for all American Free Masonry. And no longer let us withhold the just and hearty approval due them.

Second, to correct false conclusions in the popular mind. These are still widespread, varied, and utterly confusing, both to friend and foe of Masonry. One is that mobs of fanatical Masons had to resort to crime to bring about the end of Morgan's career. This is clearly charged in an inscription on the Morgan monument in Batavia cemetery. Also, that this accused criminal act met with the hearty approval of or was at least condoned by Free Masonry in general. The other conclusion is that the Batavia Lodge officially planned and put into execution the crime associated with Morgan's disappearance. This is the accusation of the Anti-Masonic factions. Now let facts act as a vindication.

The third reason is to allay hostile and bitter feelings on both sides. The excitement stirred up deep seated prejudices which soon flamed forth into bitterness. From this sprang the attempt to crush the institution of Masonry. Most of this feeling has vanished. Some still lurks in dark corners. Surely the time has come to be disarmed of suspicion and ill-will based upon inherited and cherished ignorance ❧ ❧ —S. U. M.

PROLOGUE AND APOLOGY

IN 1913 the author was called to the pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church of Batavia, N. Y., which ministry extended over a period of eight years. He was raised as a Mason in Batavia Lodge No. 475 in 1915, and still holds his membership in this lodge.

In his youth the author had heard versions of the Morgan Affair, not wholly creditable to Masonry. Later he read various articles about it, which were rather confusing. In the vicinity of Batavia he heard echoes of those stormy days which were contradictory. The early minutes of the Church showed clearly the excitement of the Morgan times, but now the entire community lived in peace and harmony as if no such episode had ever occurred ❧ ❧

To satisfy his own mind he began to make inquiry and investigations. This search for Facts instead of Rumors covers a period of over a decade. Requests came to him to address Masonic gatherings on this subject.

He found that members of the Fraternity were eager to learn substantiated facts in the case. With the increase of findings these informal talks assumed the form of formal lectures, which were finally revised as manuscripts for publishing in book form.

During the years of his delightful experiences as Chautauqua and Lyceum lecturer in thirty States, the author has been privileged to meet Masons in all walks of life. This happy contact has always been a constant source of joy. From the many expressions and questions met, he believes that the Masonic Fraternity desires to know and would welcome the Truthful Facts.

The historical background of that period must be rightfully understood. The Political, Social, and Religious conditions and relations form this background. The popularity and unpopularity of Masonry need to be seen. The character and conduct of Morgan also need reckoning with. The characters, motives, and purposes of those associated with him in this drama should be known.

The author has endeavored to weave into a clear and logical narrative the facts in the case. He made it his chief aim to sift out facts from the many records of rumors, contradictions, and falsehoods. He has lived in the vicinity of this episode for seventeen years and perhaps is the first and only member of the Batavia Lodge who has undertaken this complete task.

He has personally made the collection of authentic views which appear in this volume. The " Morgan Journey," from Batavia to Canada, has been gone over and studied by the author himself and is no weave of imagination ❧ ❧

This is my hope—of the century-old charges against American Free Masonry—that this volume may prove to be, in all unprejudiced minds, a Complete Vindication.

The Author

THE MORGAN EPISODE

TWO men sat in secret conference behind a bolted door in the office of a little old wooden printing office. It was in August, 1826, over a hundred years ago. The place was the village of Batavia, N. Y., midway between Rochester and Buffalo. Rochester was then but a small village, and Buffalo was slowly rising from its ashes caused by a special visit of the British Army thirteen years before ❧ The Erie Canal, eighteen miles north, had been completed the year before. Soldiers of the Revolutionary War, as well as those of the War of 1812-14, were passing by this office. The Holland Land Office building, famous in history with Robert E. Morris, the financier of the Revolutionary War, stood near by this printing shop. Less than a mile west stood an old fort on the famous military road to Niagara Falls. ¶ During one of these days of parleying in Miller's print shop, the funeral of the Honorable Joseph Ellicott, who surveyed the present site of Buffalo and one of the most prominent figures in Western New York of that period, was held in Batavia, the village which he had founded.

A heated discussion was taking place between these two men. Suspicion, distrust, and anger were written on both faces. The one man, the owner of the shop, carried the title of Colonel; the other man, that of Captain. Both were titles of the Second War with Great Britain. Both men had lived in the village but a few years. Both were likewise in bankruptcy in morals, principles, and money; hence, their secret conference plot. The Captain held in his hand a roll of manuscripts, carefully guarded. The Colonel kept glancing over his idle printing press, then a steady, longing gaze fell upon the roll of manuscripts. Envy, retaliation, love of money, and unholy ambition burned in his soul. The Captain, with his soul already on the Devil's auction block waiting for the highest bid, rolled up his coveted papers, placed them in his pocket, and started towards the door. The door was unbolted, and with the parting words of the Colonel, " Remember, tomorrow afternoon at three o'clock," the Captain departed for his own rooms opposite the Holland Land Office. The Colonel, still determined to carry out his project, hunted up two of his confederates and held a long conference with them. Their trap must be set and baited for its victim. The Captain found little consolation with his thoughts. Having bartered with the Colonel, he knew the dangers of withdrawing as well as the hazards of going on.

The next afternoon, August 5, 1826, the printing office was the scene of another conference. When the Captain entered, he found two additional members present. He still carried his manuscripts. A prolonged discussion again took place. It was the scene of the Devil's Auction, and the Captain finally accepted the highest bid.

The Colonel and his two confederates executed to the Captain, " a bond for five hundred thousand dollars, conditioned for the payment of one-fourth part of the sum, which should be received on the sale of said book." The bond was handed to the Captain, who forthwith passed over, out of his possession into that of theirs, the mysterious manuscripts. And here was precipitated the greatest crisis in the history of American Masonry. Here was let loose the dynamic powers which caused the greatest upheaval ever known in Masonry. It is historically known as the " Morgan Affair " in Free Masonry.

Before that door was unbolted we are to be introduced to this quartette in the printing office. Colonel David C. Miller is the printer, a man of no mean talent, but destitute of both cash and principle. Captain William A. Morgan is the possessor of the manuscripts so much desired by Miller. The other two are John Davids and Russel Dyer, who were to furnish the necessary funds for the enterprise. The proposition of this quartette was to publish a book exposing the secrets of Free Masonry. Morgan's part was to furnish the copy, supposed to come from his own pen and from his own personal knowledge of the subject; Miller was to do the printing and direct the sale of the work; Davids and Dyer were to furnish the funds necessary to carry forth the work. Each man was to receive an equal share in the profits of the sales, the estimate being made at two million dollars, and before Morgan surrendered the manuscripts a bond of five hundred thousand dollars was executed to him for his share.

Evidently matters were not running smoothly between these men, for Morgan became dissatisfied with his partners' conduct, and he became suspicious of their designs and wrote them the following letter:

August 7, 1826

" Gentlemen:—My note of this morning has not been answered—further evasion or equivocation I will not submit to—acknowledge you are not gentlemen, or I will expose you in twelve hours, unless you do as you agreed to. I am not a child—if you suppose I am, you are mistaken. I am a man and will not suffer myself to be imposed upon—you have not acted as gentlemen. I am sorry to be compelled to say it—every part of your conduct has been mysterious, and why so? My first impressions were, you are not honest men—therefore, I wish to settle, and have no more with you. If either of you feel hurt, call on me, as gentlemen, and I will give you any satisfaction you wish ❧ ❧

William Morgan.”

Free Masonry now had a terrific storm burst suddenly upon it. And Batavia became the storm center, and the brethren of the Batavia Lodge No. 433 were called upon to weather Masonry through the storm. But there was a background to this crisis. Threatening storm clouds were gathering and hovering over Free Masonry long before the “ Morgan Affair ” stirred the country. The storm simply burst into fury in Batavia and quickly overspread the country. It might have struck somewhere else as well. The match was lighted there. It might have been lighted elsewhere. Combustible fuel had been heaping up a long time. Free Masonry was facing the test whether it had the right to exist in our newly formed republic. Ordinarily the incident at Batavia would have received no public notice and locally would have been forgotten in a brief time.

Batavia, itself, was not the cause of this battle. It happened to be the battlefield. Contributory causes from a three-fold source came together on this occasion and lined up for the inevitable battle against Masonry. The popularity of Masonry within its fraternal circles was the unpopularity without. And this unpopularity was the main factor in the storm culmination.

Free Masonry was unpopular among the masses of society. It was facing a social reckoning. Only certain elect were eligible to membership. The un-elect did not altogether feel complimented. Being looked upon as a secret society with secret passwords and signs, meeting in secret places, and publishing no accounts of its proceedings, were of themselves ample to arouse suspicions, excite envy, agitate feelings, and create hostility in individuals of certain temperaments. How far indiscreet remarks and conduct on the part of the Masonic brethren aided in this unpopularity we do not know. Masonry may not have been properly interpreted to the rank and file, or at least it was insufficiently understood ❧ ❧

There was also a threatening political cloud over Masonry. The contribution of able statesmen from its membership aroused both envy and suspicion. And crafty, shrewd, poltroon politicians were seeking opportunities to discount Masonry and ride into political power and prominence. This became sorely in evidence through the activities of the Anti-Masonic Society.

Last, but not least, was the religious crusade cloud against Masonry. There was a mighty religious prejudice against the fraternity. As a secret society it was looked upon as an enemy of the church. There was a fervent zeal without knowledge. From pulpits were sown seeds of intolerance in the minds of the zealous pews. As an enemy of the church, Masonry must be fought. In this attitude of mind, rumors would find swift wings among the pious.

WILLIAM A. MORGAN

IN the popular mind, the most outstanding figure and the chief actor in this great Masonic drama, was William A. Morgan. He was crowned as a martyr and a would-be, canonized saint by the Anti-Masons, had a monument erected to his sacred memory in the Batavia Cemetery. But his conduct, while formally walking as a Mason, his subsequent actions, as well as his career before coming to Batavia, would scarcely warrant such eulogy.

Morgan was born in 1775, in Culpepper County, Virginia. He was a soldier in the War of 1812, and served as a Captain. It is said that he distinguished himself for gallant service in the battle of New Orleans under General Jackson. About 1821, he moved to York, Canada, and there engaged in the operation of a brewery. Shortly after his brewery burned down he moved to the village of Rochester, where he followed his trade as a stone mason.

" He was an operative mason by trade, an indulger in strong drink, and of bad disposition." ❧ ❧

In 1823 he moved to the village of Batavia and lived there until his sudden disappearance in 1826.

He was a man of dissolute habits, shiftless and unreliable. By false statements and pretenses he succeeded in getting a Mason by the name of Warren to vouch for him, and by this he gained access to the lodge meetings for nearly three years. During this time he also received material assistance from the Masons in the support of his family. On the grounds of pretense as a Master Mason he joined the Royal Arch Masons in LeRoy in 1825. Later he attached his signature to a petition to form a Chapter in Batavia. Because of the ever-increasing suspicions resting upon him as a pretender, the Master Masons threw aside this petition and circulated a new one, upon which Morgan was not permitted to place his signature. The old petition with Morgan's signature is still in the hands of the Chapter in Batavia Lodge. This refusal against his signature together with the Mason's withholding further aid in his family support, roused his bitter anger against the order. Like an enraged serpent it only required but an opportunity to inject the venomous fangs into the would-be enemy.

In the meantime Morgan paid several visits to New York, where he held conferences with a bright literary mind, a man who had been expelled from the Masonic Lodge in 1824.

Morgan's plight began to be a sad one. He became conscious of the growing suspicion among the Masons of his being an impostor. He was not allowed to sign the second petition. He was refused further aid for his family support. Friendless, penniless, shiftless, with neither cash nor principles, he was ready to take desperate risks in a new venture.

COL. DAVID C. MILLER

JUST at this time another actor appears on the stage of this drama. Without him Morgan would have been both helpless and harmless. David C. Miller, printer and owner of the *Batavia Advocate* steps upon the platform and plays his part. " Colonel Miller, possessed of respectable talents, a great deal of cunning, familiar with all the arts of designing men, free from all religious scruples, and, of course, ready to hoist sail to a breeze from any point of the compass, unembarrassed in his circumstances, inattentive to business, intemperate in his habits, he saw by intuition the use that might be made of Morgan, and an Anti-Masonic excitement." Miller had received the Entered Apprentice degree in some Lodge, but being found unworthy, further entrance was denied him. Peeved at this rebuke, incensed and indignant, prompted both by love of money and retaliation, he plotted a scheme. He had everything to hope, nothing to fear or lose ❧ ❧

He and Morgan formed a combine. The proposition was that Morgan should write a book on Free Masonry, exposing its secrets and obligations to the world. Miller was cunning enough to hope that the public would readily purchase and read such a book. But it was not the motive of educating the public mind which prompted the movement. Miller's printing press was mostly idle. His time was mostly unemployed. Besides he was needing cash. He was going to hoist his sail to the right breeze. Morgan was to furnish the copy; Miller would do the printing. But both were as destitute of money as they were of morals and ethics. They were unable to raise the required amount of money to publish the book and carry on the sales. And so they sought about, largely through Miller, to secure partners in their enterprise. These men were found, being John Davids and Russel Dyer. But it developed quite clearly that Miller, Davids, and Dyer were the real promoters of the scheme. All they cared for Morgan was to secure the possession of his manuscripts. To accomplish this they executed in his behalf a worthless bond for half a million dollars, which was not worth the paper written upon, as Morgan's share of the profit. After the possession of the manuscripts was obtained, they put him out and kept him out.

¶ The manuscripts thus wrought from Morgan, pretending to be " Morgan's illustrations " of Masonry, were not original. Morgan never wrote them. They were a copy of a pamphlet printed in England years before.

Morgan doubtless procured them from his literary friend in New York City. But for Miller's purpose and project they were sufficiently valid.

MILLER'S METHODS

UP to this time everything was moving quietly on the outside. The conferences in Miller's print shop were held behind closed doors. After Morgan accepted the worthless bond as compensation for surrendering his fake manuscripts, he was further debarred from Miller and his confederates. Batavia Lodge No. 433 was moving along quietly and peacefully like all other lodges. There were no preparations being made for attack or defense. Morgan had been quietly dropped from attendance and fellowship. No thought or threat of persecution followed. Doubtless in most hearts there was a deep pity for the degraded man, who had placed himself in such jeopardy. It is reasonably inferred that the brethren did not even make a public exposure of the predicament by public discussion. Batavia Masons were like all real Masons. In the meantime Morgan must have been the wandering Judas. Having betrayed his pretended loyalty to the fraternity he could no longer seek its fellowship. Having bartered his soul to Miller and immediately debarred and ignored, yes threatened, he was left alone with the thoughts of his self-incurred plight and misery.

But Miller and his confederates were not idle. He was wary enough to realize that excitement must be stirred up to create an interest in the sale of his proposed book. Otherwise it would be still-born from the press. Accordingly, in the weekly edition of his paper, the *Batavia Advocate* he glaringly announced the forthcoming edition of a complete exposure of Free Masonry. In this he may have had two hopes; one that the Masons, in their self-defense and eagerness to suppress the proposed volume, would immediately buy him off. In this he made ignorant calculations with Free Masonry. The other hope was to stir up excitement among the Masons, which in its activity would spread outside. In this he again was disappointed. He incorrectly read the mind and heart of Masonry.

But excitement must be, and so it came. On the eighth of September, 1826, the village of Batavia had its first volley of excitement. And the scheme was well laid. About midnight forty or more persons, disguised under face masks, came out of somewhere into the village. Properly trained and directed by a leader, this party marched to the printing office of Miller and set it on fire. This happened at the time when the work of setting up the type was at its highest speed. This attempt to burn the printing office was charged up to the Batavia Masons by Miller and his gang.

The story was sent abroad, with the desired effect of stirring up both a local and general excitement ❧ ❧

Can any unbiased mind think of a body of forty Masons, wearing masks and otherwise disguised, marching in a solid column in the thickly settled section of a law abiding village, with the avowed purpose of setting fire to a building? Doubtless at that time the whole membership of the Lodge scarcely exceeded half that number. It would at least be reasonable to suppose that there were a few well behaved members who would have intercepted such a thing. " What adds to the singularity of the affair, is that Miller, on the day previous to this pretended attempt to burn his office, had collected several barrels of water and placed them, probably by presentiment of the approaching danger, near the place where the fire was communicated, so that it was extinguished without any material damage." Is it to be inferred that Miller was living in such righteous ways that the Messengers from the other world kindly conveyed to him the coming danger?

At the same time Miller announced that the Masons were attempting to do spy work around his office. Not being successful in burning the building they would resort to polite trickery. Miller claimed that a stranger came from Canada seeking work in his office. He was given employment in publishing the book. By his clear insight into motives Miller discovered him to be a Mason, who was sent there to purloin the sacred work. Of course, this also was published abroad, and helped not a little in intensifying and spreading the excitement. Again it is difficult to understand why such a sagacious editor as Miller would take a total stranger into his office and assign him an important part in his great task. For so careful was Miller in preserving the full rights of his intended publication, that he compelled Davids and Dyer to take the following oath:

" We, and each of us, do hereby most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, that we will never divulge, during our natural lives, communicate, or make known to any person or persons, in the known world, our knowledge, or any part thereof, respecting William Morgan's intentions (communicated to us) to publish a book on the subject of Free Masonry, neither by writing, marking, insinuations, nor any way devisable by man. Sworn and subscribed this thirteenth day of March, 1826."

¶ To prevent others from publishing the same work, Miller also took out a copyright for his book, August 14, the same year.

In the *Batavia Advocate* Miller brought three charges against the Batavia Masons.

The first was their attempt to burn down his office, thus destroying all copies, which would, of course forever prevent his purposes from full accomplishment. We have seen how this attempt was carried out by the "forty masked Masons," and their designs interrupted by Miller's barrels of water.

The second was in bringing a Mason from Canada into his office as a spy, to purloin the copy. But it is likely that this "Masonic spy" was none other than a man by the name of Giddins, whose "Anti-Masonic Almanac" later flooded the country.

The third charge was that the Masons had combined a scheme to keep Morgan and Miller from getting together. But already Miller had kicked Morgan out of his office and bolted the door against him. So the Masons' task here was a light affair.

Through his own paper Miller broadcasted these charges throughout the country. And there were enough gullible minds to accept them as the naked truth. His influence, as an editor, was powerful enough to subsidize certain papers. Certain preachers were ill-balanced sufficiently to accept them and denounce Masonry from the pulpits. Gullible minds in the pews relished such provender as gospel food. There were enough silly minds among the crowds to set such gossip afloat on wings. Miller was in the dawn of his glory and approaching the noontide in the fulfillment of his expectations.

In addition to the *Batavia Advocate*, published by Miller, two other periodicals were published in Batavia during the first year of the excitement. One was called the

Morgan Investigator, and was published at the office of the *Advocate.* The other, *The Masonic Intelligencer*, was published for about the same period at the *People's Press* in Batavia. ¶In the meantime some Masons, doubtless, got excited. Perhaps words and statements unwisely fell from their lips. This is not to be wondered at, though to be deeply regretted. But as a rule the Masons of Batavia, though fully aware of happening events, acted about as all Masons everywhere. They took no cognizance of the announcements. They passed no resolutions against the movement. They formed no line of attack. They planned no battle. They moved about like decent, self-respecting, law-abiding citizens. Such is, and always was true Masonry.

But the true minds of the Masons were awake to the affairs of the day. Notwithstanding, that threats and false charges did not cause much fear, yet they knew the evil forebodings of the hour. Miller's motives and purpose were read like a book. His actions were clearly interpreted. But they asked for no pity or sympathy. They sought no police protection to themselves or property. They made no threats of retaliation. They enlisted neither pulpit nor press in their behalf. Self-mastery and silence were their ample security.

MORGAN'S PLIGHT AND MASONS' MIND

MORGAN stayed in Batavia during these days of ever-increasing intensity of excitement, a most sorrowful and pathetic figure. He had betrayed those who had befriended and aided him into the hands of Miller and his confederates, and the latter had closed their doors against him. All he had to show for his ignominious treachery was a worthless bond.

None of the contents of Miller's coffer ever reached Morgan. The break between him and Miller had been purposely planned, and reconciliation never followed. It was a case of one lone-handed crook ousted by a gang of worse crooks. Those of the fraternity whom he had betrayed were not the ones he would likely seek for counsel. And he could find little fellowship and peace among the motley crowds. In addition, his domestic affairs were pitiable—a young wife and an infant, but a few weeks old. Jobless, shiftless, conscienceless, dissipated, disappointed, and wrecked, he had no one to whom he could turn. The aid that the Masons were in the habit of giving him in family support, of course, was withdrawn. He walked the streets, a sad and lonely figure. Besides, there were rumored threats of his life, not by Masons, but rumors patented and circulated by Miller for his one avowed purpose.

¶ That there were Masons—in name only—who had become converts to the project of Miller and his confederates and had been passive disciples, there can be little doubt. This became evident later in the movement of " Seceding Masons." There is evidence also that some Masons did become excited, uttering in public their denunciations of Morgan, even attended by threats. And this is to be deeply regretted. That lively discussions and heated debates took place in adjoining Lodges we have ample records. And that such proceedings became public gossip is not commendable to the order.

Also that Batavia had some Master Masons, with at least one outstanding Grand Master and Leader, we are certain, of which facts we are proud. To these minds the critical situation was clear. Upon their shoulders rested weighty responsibilities. In their hearts fires were kindled. With ugly facts at hand, the scales of human judgment were being quietly adjusted for proper weighing. There were private conferences between such individuals. There were special communications of Batavia Lodge No. 433, and in such communications certain plans were agreed upon.

THE APPROACHING CRISIS

FREE Masonry of America was on the threshold of its greatest crisis in history. It was facing the battlefield. The conflict was inevitable ❧ By circumstances and fate's decree that battlefield was Batavia. The brethren of that Lodge were not to fight a battle for themselves, but for Masons everywhere. The issue was, " Can and Should Free Masonry exist in the American Republic?" Had it the right of existence? Would it be allowed to exist? Its right of existence was now challenged. The attack was on. It was aimed at what its foes considered its vulnerable spot; viz., its Secret Oaths and Obligations. Against it were being flanked the army of suspicions, jealousies, calumnies, vituperations, and falsehoods. Could Free Masonry withstand the attack? Should it be met with the same weapons as in the hands of the enemy? Were incendiarism, arson, deceptive spying, perjury, abduction, and murder to be its weapons of defense? Or were the inherent principles of the order itself, properly directed by Masons—first of all, Men—sufficient unto the evils of the day? Batavia Masons did not seek the hazards, responsibilities, fame, or infamy that fate allotted them. They must determine a mode of proceedings. ¶ The village itself became a mecca for crowds. The curious, the gullible, the sentimental, and the pious, together with the masses, paid visits to the external shrine of Miller's printing shop. The hand press, dedicated "to the cause of human liberty and progress," was about to turn out its first grist of palpable pabula to the hungry minded masses ❧ ❧

Batavia Lodge No. 433 had its own temple. It was installed December 19, 1825, the ceremonies taking place in St. James Episcopal Church. Having no building of its own, the meetings were held for several years in Humphrey's Tavern, located on the present site of the Hotel Richmond. It was furnished with the emblematic equipment of all Lodges. Its chairs were filled with serious and thoughtful officers. More than routine matters were under consideration. Special reports of special committees were given fixed attention. Masons' hearts were beating. Master Masons' minds were thinking. A calm, deliberate, commanding voice spoke. Back of that voice were a Mason's heart and mind. It was understood. It carried the day. That voice spoke, that mind thought, that heart felt for all Masonry for all time.

Morgan's situation became more precarious each passing day. He had a heart-broken wife and a shattered home. He had received numerous threats of his life. He dared not approach the printing office. He had been seen in company with several Masons. He was arrested in the village on the charge of theft and was confined within the jail limits.

MORGAN'S DISAPPEARANCE

MORGAN'S arrest in Batavia and removal to Canandaigua—fifty miles away—and confinement in jail there, was legal in every way. The charge being theft, the penalty of imprisonment was at that time legal. Miller charged the Masons as instigators of this arrest, a pretext on their part to separate Morgan from Miller, and thus hinder the work. Miller also charged the officers as being cruel and handling the prisoner roughly. It is too bad that such an outrage on the part of the Masons should have touched the tender heart of Miller and roused his sympathies. At least he could use the occasion in stirring up more excitement and enlisting much sympathy. His tears were fruitful ❧ ❧

The law, at that time, provided that if the debt of the imprisoned debtor were paid, the debtor could be released. Morgan was in the debtor's cell twenty-four hours, when the debt was paid. The receipt was shown the jailer, who in turn immediately released the prisoner. This happened sometime before midnight. Morgan, a free man, stepped out of jail, accompanied his would-be benefactors from prison, and disappeared. The whole transaction was orderly and legal.

This sudden disappearance of Morgan was a severe shock to the sensitive mind and tender soul of Miller. Especially since Morgan carried with him the executed bond of half a million dollars, which Miller's confederates tried to wrench from Mrs. Morgan after her husband was taken from his home to Canandaigua. The best the notorious printer could do was to announce through his *Advocate* that Morgan was abducted by the Masons. Morgan's release from the jail occurred September 12, 1826. Many a debtor had thus been released and no public notice taken of the affair. It was a common event. No one inquired about his whereabouts. Why should it have been otherwise with Morgan? He had no pressing business engagements at home. His social duties were not exacting at that time. As a citizen his presence was not urgently needed. He was not an employee of the Miller printing office, and the work in the shop was moving along at a high speed without him. Had he not already imparted all he knew about the secrets of Masonry to Miller and his confederates? Had he not before this passed into their hands his carefully prepared manuscripts? Why should his presence be so much desired? Why was his absence so noticeable and alarming? Why should the Masons be immediately charged with the crime without a reasonable amount of legal investigations?

THE PITCH OF EXCITEMENT

THIS event brought the pitch of excitement to the point desired by Miller, Davids, Dyer, Giddins, and their gang. Their shop kept running day and night. " Their books fell like raindrops from the press; costing, probably, ten cents. These the excited public appetite swallowed, to a surfeit, for some time, at the price of one dollar. The Bible, tract, and Webster's Spelling Book hardly afforded equal occupation for the press. The most malignant and improbable falsehoods and slanders, which at any other time, would have returned with vengeance to plague the inventors, in the present state of the public feeling were received with implicit faith."

Within several days after Morgan's disappearance, Miller figured in a spectacular arrest, in which he shone in full glory as the chief figure. Justice Bartow, of LeRoy—twelve miles away—issued the warrant, which was placed in the hands of Constable Jesse French. French went to Miller's office and arrested him. He was taken in a carriage, driven off, attended by a mob of men armed with clubs. He claimed that he was taken into the Masonic Lodge room at Stafford, enroute to LeRoy, and there efforts were made to frighten him with threats of the fate already fallen to Morgan. Outside the Lodge rooms a huge crowd of his friends had assembled, who offered bail which was refused. He was then taken to LeRoy, " guarded by a large number of armed men and an equal number of his friends." Going before the magistrate, he was discharged and driven back to Batavia. Conclusions, from evidence, are that Miller had planned this spectacular episode through his confederates, from which he derived both pleasure and notoriety. It served his purpose of adding fuel to the fire. Upon what pretext he was arrested, why the warrant was not issued by a magistrate in Batavia and the trial held there, why he should have been held up on the way and interviewed in the Stafford Lodge rooms, Miller never took occasion to inform the public.

The match was lighted. The fires were kindled. The lightning flashed. The thunders pealed out. The gathering storm broke in all its fury. The question, " What became of Morgan?" was on almost everybody's lips. There was but one answer that met with popular approval and favor. It was THAT THE MASONS HAD MURDERED MORGAN. Proof was not sought, but punishment was the order of the day. Never did public frenzy rise to so high a pitch, or minds in general become so infatuated.

The whole Masonic Fraternity was denounced. They were murderers, traitors, villains, vagabonds, a powerful government within a government taking the law within their own hands. The press, platform, and pulpit turned forth such vituperative epithets against the order, that gullible minds became full of poisoned frenzy. So distinguished an American citizen as Ex-President John Quincy Adams, in a great public speech, said: " Masonry ought forever to be abolished. It is wrong—essentially wrong—a seed of evil which can never produce any good. The existence of such an order is a foul plot upon the morals of a community."

Broken down politicians now hoisted their battered sails to the Anti-Masonic breezes. Decrepit, weak, and emaciated demagogues, after inhaling the sniffs which emanated from Miller's shop, " received strength immediately in their ankle bones." " Bankrupts in politics became patriots—atheists became moralists—Anti-Masons of every school became genuine republicans." Such men as Myron Holley, journalist and bookseller; Thurlow Weed, editor and boss leader in politics; and Solomon Southwick, all became regenerated from political transgressions, and were so renewed by the sanctifying grace of the pure spirit of Anti-Masonry, that they were stamped as pure patriots. Southwick quickly became so " twice-born " in his attainment of perfection that he got himself nominated for Governor of the State in 1826. A new political banner was now hoisted to the winds, and William H. Seward marched into the State Senate in 1852, under such a banner carried by Thurlow Weed. Great success came to " blue-light federals and wornout politicians " in riding into office in the excitement. " Miller, from a poor, degraded, abandoned profligate, later became Clerk of the County Court. Tracy had gotten a seat in the Legislature; Spencer, Special Council; Thurlow Weed, a standing witness; and Solomon Southwick the privilege of running for Governor. Norton got a seat in Congress, for which to use his own words, he owed Billy Morgan many thanks, as hell would have frozen over before he would have been elected, if it had not been for the excitement." Disappointed office-seekers in Pennsylvania caught the inspiration from New York. At a State Convention in Harrisburg, they gave the following out as a public address:

" It will not be sufficient to withhold public favor from Free Masons alone—all their partisans should receive the same measure of justice. They have even less claims upon public favor than the sworn fraternity themselves. Timid and time-serving neutrality is more degrading to its votaries, and more dangerous to the public, than open and magnanimous error."

THE BARK OF THE WATCH DOG

BIGOTS in the church were not wanting in those days. Neither were they silent and passive. Some of the clergy doffed their shepherd robes and staff and donned uniforms of ecclesiastical policemen. The gentle voice of the shepherd changed to the bark of the watch-dog and yelp of the hound. The shepherd's staff and crook gave place to the bludgeon and scalping knife. Such made use of the excitement to advance their cause and strengthen their power. Such were Elders: Bernard, Cochran, Sterns, and Sanborn, four prime leaders of the Seceding Masons. Masonic members, no matter how worthily their walk and conduct in the church had been, were given the option of renouncing Masonry or receiving excommunication from the church. The First Presbyterian Church of Batavia passed a resolution through its Session that no Mason could ever join that church. Local Baptist Churches expelled Masons who refused to renounce their Masonic membership. So deep-seated did this feeling reach that it required several generations to overcome. In fact it still lingers in sheltered nooks to this day. Ministers, against whom no breath of ill-repute had ever been dreamed or heard, were dismissed. Churches became divided—remnants of such divisions still exist.

Ministers of the Gospel, rolling forth their thunders of Anti-Masonry and pouring out the vials of wrath on the heads of their flocks; ministers ministering at the altar of Peace, who should have lived in peace with all mankind and kept free from party strifes, leading in such a crusade; is it any wonder that the flock became frenzied and panic-stricken? There were ministers who were carried away by the shouting of the tumult, perhaps in an honest fashion allowed themselves to be persuaded that all the incidents of the disappearance of Morgan were the fruit of the institution of Masonry, thus proving it to be corrupt. Therefore, being dangerous to the cause of the Christian religion, it should be denounced. But preaching anathemas from the pulpit, imploring curses upon the institution about which they knew nothing, or knowing, spoke falsely, would hardly be the standard of today.

But Masonry was facing the test of its right of existence along side the Christian Church. It was a fiery, bitter, and long-contended test. That Free Masonry stood the test we are proud. That the church passed through such self-imposed inquisition and came out purer and more tolerant we are grateful. That our republic houses, protects, and is blessed by both institutions we doubly rejoice.

MASONIC COMMOTION

MORGAN'S disappearance was a certainty, and widely advertised. The charge of abduction and murder against the Masons was gaining acceptance and credence every day. The outcries, tumults, harangues, and denunciations of frenzied minds were increasing in momentum and area. That such charges would create agitation within the order itself is most likely and logical. Serious minded Masons were deeply and sincerely concerned. The timid and faint-hearted withdrew from the battle-front and passed into the history of forgetfulness. The rabid, such as: Bernard, Sterns, Cary, Read, and Talbot, moved by the tumults of the agitated crowds, unreasonable and inconsistent, became self-styled Seceding Masons. The unprincipled members in name only became Renegade Masons, and for a long period waged a guerrilla warfare.

The institution itself was to blame for admitting into membership the unfit and unworthy and was obliged to pay the penalty of its blunders. It had to pass through the fiery furnace, its " dross to be consumed, and gold to be refined." It had to submit to the winnowing process that the "chaff might be separated from the wheat."

Lodge rooms were not wholly "altars of peace" for a time. Meetings were not all blessed with harmony and good fellowship. Under such circumstances, what else could be expected? The rabid ones broke out in fierce denunciations. The heat of public agitation radiated in the Lodge rooms. The frenzied sentiment of the outside oozed through the walls to the inside. The stench of villainous vituperation was apparent in the meetings which followed.

"Fightings within, and fears without," some Lodges suspended meetings entirely. Then the Grand Lodge of the State, moved by the hopes of bringing quietus and peace, took drastic steps. It called in and rescinded most of the charters of the State, particularly in Western New York. How this judicial act was looked upon at the time we do not know. Whether to appease the wrath and fury of the foe; whether as a punitive measure on the accused Lodges; or whether it was in the hope of allaying the storm and clearing the atmosphere; each reader is at liberty to determine for himself. Lodges as a rule rendered obedience to the Grand Master's Dictate, and in the light of all facts, such obedience was not without results. It allowed each Mason to choose his own place and crowd. The timid and passive retired into the shades of silence and noncommital. The rabid mustered themselves out and enlisted into the belligerent army of Seceding Masons. The renegades also awaited their day of pillaging, while the real Masons never swerved from loyalty and devotion at heart ❧ ❧

In 1826 there were in the State of New York four hundred and eighty Lodges, with a membership of twenty thousand. Two years later there were but seventy-five Lodges, and but three hundred members, though a number of Lodges continued to hold meetings, elect officers, etc., with their charters revoked.

Today in the State of New York, there are over three hundred and twenty thousand members ❧ ❧

THE FINDING OF A BODY

TO all the agitation and excitement of the succeeding year of Morgan's disappearance a new sensation was added early in October, 1827. The body of a man was found at the mouth of Oak Orchard Creek in Lake Ontario. This was near the village of Albion, perhaps within twenty-five miles from Batavia. The discovery of the putrid body was made on October 7, and it was supposed to have been washed and left there by the surf. Being in a high putrid state, the legal inquest was held and the body immediately buried near the spot. The Coroner who held the first inquest over the body, found at Oak Orchard Creek, and ordered it immediately buried, was Giles Slater. He decided that it was not the body of Morgan. Mr. Dwight S. Beckwith of Albion, N. Y. is a grandson. Mr. Beckwith is a prominent business man and was made a Mason sixty-one years ago.

But, inasmuch as prior to this a Special Committee had been at work raking the bed of Niagara River and a part of Lake Ontario, and were to make a report of examination of witnesses and suspicioned parties, and as the excitement was now subsiding, the finding of this body afforded a good subject for the agitators. That it was Morgan's body soon spread throughout the country. The disciples of Miller from Batavia and Rochester, accordingly made a pilgrimage to the spot, bringing Mrs. Morgan with them to identify the body. The body was disinterred, though all human identity had gone. Fourteen witnesses were sworn. After learning Mrs. Morgan's description of her husband—teeth, hair, head, etc., each witness testified as seeing such resemblances and marks of identification in the decomposed human mass which they viewed. " The jury, composed of twenty-three persons, subscribed to a verdict that it was Morgan's body and that he came to his death by drowning." Flushed with victory, these master-spirits, with great pomp and parade, had the body conveyed to Batavia. Multitudes from all directions flocked to the funeral procession. Funeral orations were poured forth from the souls of eloquent divines, such as that of Mark Antony over the body of Cæsar. Mrs. Morgan, of course, was the star mourner. The body was again interred, this time in the Batavia cemetery, as that of Morgan. "The cry of vengeance against Masons was now on the breeze, and the ghost of Morgan was said to be abroad."

But the funeral business of the body was not yet over. Rumor spread to Canada, and the story reached the ears of the real widow of the drowned man. Timothy Munroe, of Upper Canada left his home and was drowned in the Niagara River. From the description of the clothes found on the body, Mrs. Munroe was induced to believe it was that of her husband. With a complete description of her husband she, with other relatives, came to Batavia. The body was again disinterred, and an examination by an impartial jury holding the inquest, it was pronounced as the body of Timothy Munroe.

This just verdict of an intelligent and honest jury must have been a severe shock to the eloquent orators and tearful mourners at the previous funeral. The body of Munroe was sent back to Canada for burial with “ the heartless farewell of Thurlow Weed, the Apostle of Anti-Masonry, ‘ that he was good enough for Morgan until after the election.’ ”

INVESTIGATIONS

The Committee of Thirty-eight

FOLLOWING the disappearance of Morgan in the great and frenzied excitement, the public mind rose to a high temperature. The popular conclusion, "That the Masons killed Morgan," was the only orthodox one. The deed must be avenged; the perpetrators must be punished; investigations must find the guilty and bring them to justice. Without waiting for the regular process of legal proceedings, public-spirited citizens, most if not all Anti-Masonic, formed a committee to ferret out and hound suspicious parties. It was known then as "The Committee of 38," composed of the following men:

Genesee Committee—T. F. Talbot, Trumbull Cary, Timothy Fitch, James P. Smith, Lyman D. Prindle, Eleazer Southworth, William Keyes, Jonathan Lay, William Davis, Hinman Holden;

Rochester Committee—Josiah Bissell, Jr., F. F. Backus, Heman Norton, Fredric Whittlesey, Thurlow Weed, Samuel Works;

Victor Committee—Samuel Rawson, Elijah Sedgwick, Samuel Ewing, Nathan Jenks, James M. Wheeler, Thomas Wright, John Sargeant;

Chili Committee—Isaac Lacy, William Pixley, Benjamin Bowen, Samuel Lacy;

Wheatland Committee—John Garbut, Truman Edson, Clark Hall;

Bloomfield Committee—Ralph Wilcox, Heman Chapin, Bani Bradley, Josiah Porter, Orson Benjamin, Jonathan Buell;

Lewiston Committee—Bates Cook, John Philips.

GOV. DEWITT CLINTON

DE WITT CLINTON, one of the few highest Masons in the Union, and regarded today in New York State as its greatest among the great of all its Masons, was at that time Governor of the State. The Lieutenant-Governor was considered an Anti-Mason, as inferred from his participation in attempted Anti-Masonic legislation. Governor Clinton, loyal as a Mason, and loyal as the Governor, offered a reward of two thousand dollars, out of his own pocket, for the apprehension of the perpetrators of the reputed crime, and called on all officers, civil and military, to assist in detecting and bringing them to justice.

The Governor of the Province of Ontario also offered a reward for the apprehension of the perpetrators. For it was rumored that some Canadian Masons were involved in the affair, and the crime committed along the shores of Canada.

Proclamations of Governor Clinton:

Governor Clinton issued three proclamations. The first was issued immediately after Morgan's disappearance, and the second October 26, 1826. The information concerning the disappearance of Morgan was transmitted to the Governor by Theodore F. Talbot, a strong Anti-Mason, as appears from the first proclamation: " Greetings, Whereas information, under oath, has been transmitted to me by Theodore F. Talbot. . . . . . representing that divers outrages and oppressions have been committed on the rights of persons residing in the village of Batavia."

Third Proclamation of Governor Clinton: " Whereas, the measures adopted for the discovery of William Morgan, after his unlawful abduction from Canandaigua in September last, have not been attended with success; and whereas, many of the good citizens of the State are under an impression, from the lapse of time and other circumstances, that he has been murdered. Now, therefore, to the end that, if living, he may be restored to his family; and if murdered, that the perpetrators may be brought to condign punishment, I have thought fit to issue this proclamation, promising a reward of one thousand dollars for the discovery of the said William Morgan, if alive; and if murdered, a reward of two thousand dollars for the discovery of the offender or offenders; to be paid on conviction and on the certificate of the attorney general, or officer prosecuting on the part of the State, that the person or persons claiming the last mentioned reward, is or are justly entitled to the same, under this proclamation. And I further promise a free pardon, as far as I am authorized under the Constitution of the State, to any accomplice or co-operator who shall make a full discovery of the offender or offenders. And I do enjoin it upon all officers and ministers of justice and all other persons, to be vigilant and active in bringing to justice the perpetrators of a crime so abhorrent to humanity, and so derogatory from the ascendency of law and good order.

L. S. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and the privy seal, at the city of Albany, this 19th day of March, Anno Domini 1827.

DEWITT CLINTON

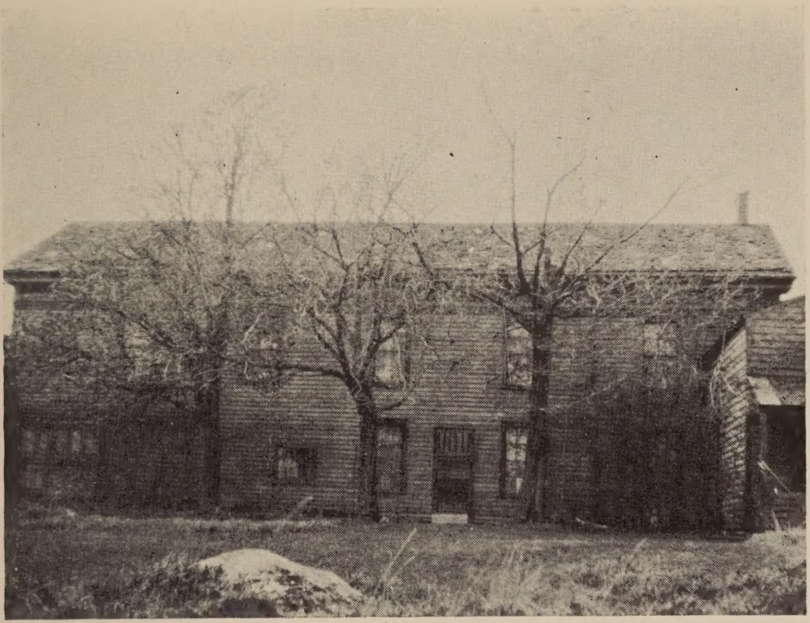
Governor Clinton died February 11, 1826, and Lieutenant-Governor, Nathaniel Pitcher, immediately became Governor. The death of DeWitt Clinton, while in office, explains the omission of his name in the investigations which followed.

ANOTHER COMMITTEE

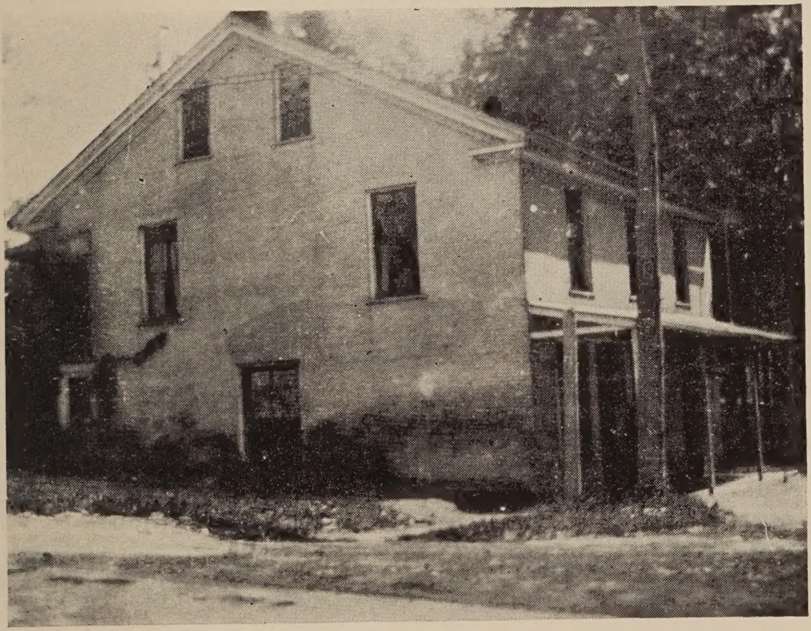
IN the meantime, a Committee was appointed, not by the Governor, but by the Apostles of Anti-Masonry, including such as Miller, Bernard, Weed, Giddins, whose duty was to "examine and make report of such matters, relating to the affair, as they thought proper." But the real purpose and object was to prevent a fair, legal, and dispassionate investigation and report. Something had to be done to keep the excited floods from subsiding. Warrants were issued, arrests made, subpoenies served, trials instituted without numbers, and every day and at each succeeding trial, new tales of blood and murder were supplied. To come out and acknowledge a participation in the Abduction of Morgan was a sure way of ensuring public approbation. Even Giddins made confession of having been the keeper of the arsenal at Fort Niagara where Morgan was supposed to have been kept several days. But even the excited courts threw out his confession as baseless and worthless. For his reward Giddins had a wide circulation of his famous *Anti-Masonic Almanac* ❧ There were persons carried away by the frenzy and insanity of the public mind who sought a martyr's fame and glory by confessing their guilt in having murdered Morgan. Such a confession was made by a certain R. H. Hill. ¶ There had been so many true confessions, each contradicting the other, that a jury, on oath, would no longer believe them. Morgan had been seen alive in as many places as in which Shakespeare was born. His cries of, " Murder! Help! " were heard from Dan to Bersheba. He had been seen gagged, handcuffed, in closed carriages from Pole to Pole. His shrieks for help along the Niagara River lasted for days, and rose above the din and noise of the Falls. " The testimony," of those, " sworn and subscribed before me," became so shallow, far-fetched, and imaginary, that it was worse than useless. The witnesses' testimonies of seeing black horses, gray horses, sorrel horses, drawing a closed carriage, in which they " thought they saw Morgan," became mere fads.

The work of this Committee in its examinations, findings, (which included the body of Morgan), proscriptions, schooled perjuries, etc., over which some ministers " petitioned the Throne of Grace," " pronounced benedictions, sanctified and blessed by their presence, and around which church officials pow-powed," during the two years, had become a bad mess. The stench and filth began to emanate into the nostrils of the public. The robes of hypocrisy—both religious and patriotic—became threadbare.

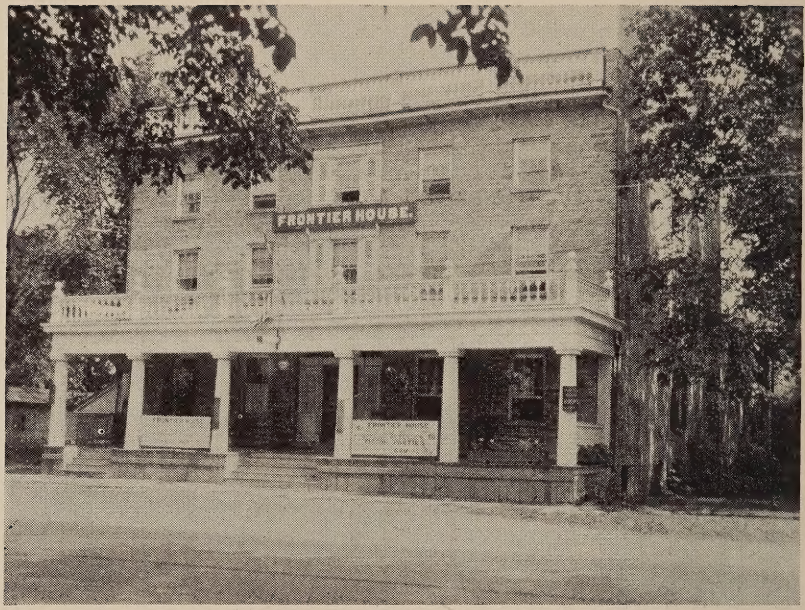
Finally the atmosphere became sufficiently calm for real legal and judicial investigation. Early in 1828, Governor Pitcher appointed a Commission to make a full investigation. Two years later this Commission made its report. Arrests were made of apprehended parties. Minor trials were held. The three most important trials were held in Canandaigua and Lockport. A summary of these trials is given in another chapter.



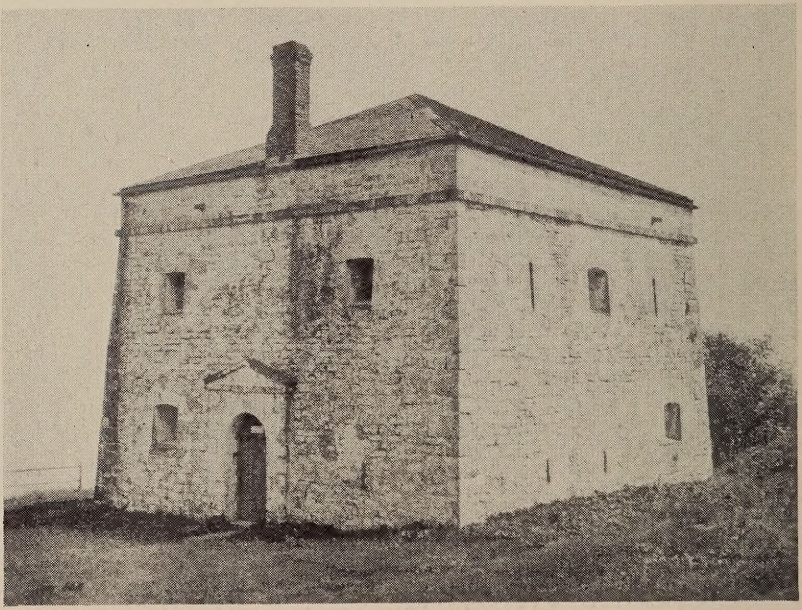
JENNY LIND HALL, EAST BETHANY, N. Y.



THE MASONIC HALL, AT PAVILION, N. Y.


FRONTIER HOUSE

FRONTIER HOTEL AT LEWISTON, N. Y.



MAGAZINE BUILDING AT FORT NIAGARA, N. Y.

MORGAN'S BENEFACTORS

DURING this gathering storm the Masons in Batavia were not insensible to the perils impending, neither ignorant of the character of their foes. It is not to be assumed that they dreamed of the magnitude towards which events were pointed. To them, at the first outbreak, it was merely a local affair, and as such did they prepare to act. The pulse of Free Masonry was beating; its mind was thinking; its heart was feeling; its strong arm was getting in training. There was no precedent to be their guide; no articles of constitution to consult. But the deeper springs of Masonry in the heart and mind were being brought into quiet array. This was all beneath the din and roar of the tumults on the surface. Footprints, then invisible, were to be “left on the sands of time.” Footprints that Masons, seeing today, “shall take heart again.” “Minutes of meetings,” not scribed on paper to be read by the biased and based, the vulgar and unworthy, and exposed to public scorn and ridicule, but engraved on tablets in retentive breasts. Hearts, free from malice, ill-will, vengeance, and fear were beating unconsciously for the sustaining of the life of the institution for the coming ages. Clear, unprejudiced, unbiased minds were interpreting the principles of the order as applicable to the emergency then at hand, that when " the books are opened " by posterity and read, they need not be put to shame. And now at the close of the century, when the mind is clear and the heart is calm, let the " books be opened," and let them be read.

¶ At that time Batavia Lodge No. 433 had seventy-four members, and all but two could be relied upon. These two found their exit of escape, as will be pointed out later. One of the members, William R. Thompson, was then the Sheriff of Genesee County. From reliable sources he gathered the facts, took counsel, apprehended clearly the critical danger of William Morgan, and knew too well the dangerous trap that Miller and his confederates had set for him. He had first hand information from Morgan as to the latter's danger and his wishes and requests for help.

Sheriff Thompson called into his counsel Eli Bruce, then Sheriff of Niagara County, a member of Lockport Lodge, No. 73, and formerly a member of Niagara Lodge, No. 345 of Lewiston, the latter being the first Lodge in Niagara County. Sheriff Bruce immediately got in touch with Colonel William King, Master of the Lewiston Lodge, who then resided at Youngstown a few miles distant, between Lewiston and Fort Niagara. Colonel King at once communicated with John Whitney, a Mason living in Rochester, and supposed to have been a brother of General Parkhurst Whitney of the Lewiston Lodge. ¶ The Master of the Lodge at Canandaigua, Nicholas Chesebro, was also brought into the council. Orsamus Turner, also a member of the Lockport Lodge, editor of a paper, and Historian of the Holland Land Company, with Captain Jared Darrow, was sent into Upper Canada to interview some Masons there. All these things happened quickly and quietly in August.

One evening, early in September, John Whitney of Rochester, met Morgan on the street in Batavia and invited him to take supper with him in Donald's Tavern. At the table Whitney made full inquiry of Morgan about his affairs and received clear statements in reply. Morgan admitted that he was in a sorrowful predicament; that the only friend he had was his wife and from the way he treated her, she ought not to be his friend.

With an infant three weeks old, his wife was crying all the time, fearing they would starve to death. He was out of work, and the Masons no longer gave him donations. He had received threats of being killed. He had sold himself to Miller upon the promise of half a million dollars, and Miller had paid him but a shilling at a time, and then with personal abuse ❧ ❧

And then spoke Whitney: " I am authorized to give you relief. I will give you fifty dollars in cash with which to buy yourself suitable clothes and help your family in its present need, if you will go to Canada and settle there. When you are located in Canada you shall have five hundred dollars, and your family shall be sent to you. I pledge you that they shall be provided for until they rejoin you."

¶ Morgan quickly consented and accepted the offer. At Whitney's suggestion Morgan asked for an escort to convey him safely away, and the escort was assured. Morgan also consented to submit to two legal processes of the law, for Whitney and his aid were not going to be a party to the evasion of any law. Neither would they escort a fugitive away from justice. Morgan consented to submit to a removal to Canandaigua—fifty miles away—in a legal process, for trial on two charges. One was for petit larceny, the other for debt. Morgan willingly consented to all these plans, asked for a strong escort, was fully aware of all that was to take place, placed full confidence in Whitney, and trustfully awaited developments.

With almost lightning speed and mathematical accuracy Morgan's escort, routing, and destination were planned and completed. In the age of neither railroads, telephones, telegraphs, it was a great piece of diplomatic strategy, and for the purpose, not of money reward, neither glory nor revenge; but that of rendering aid to a fellow-man in the direst of all dangers, rescuing him from the hands of his revengeful enemies, delivering him in a safe place, and helping him to " begin life anew." And all this was offered to one who had betrayed them.

About September 9, Ebenezer Kingsley secured a warrant from Jeffrey Chipman, Justice of the Peace, on the charge of petit larceny against William Morgan. This action was begun by parties in Canandaigua. The warrant for Morgan's arrest was given to Constable Halloway Haywood of Canandaigua. On Sunday, September 10, the Constable with his aid went to Batavia and arrested Morgan on Monday morning at Donald's Tavern. Morgan offered no resistance, but a greatly excited mob quickly gathered. Among them was Miller, who begged for Morgan's release, saying that he, Miller, was bail for Morgan in a debt, and he, Miller, would have to pay it if they took Morgan away.

The Constable with Morgan arrived in Canandaigua early in the evening and the case was heard at once in Chipman's office. The complaint that Morgan had stolen a shirt and cravat from Kingsley was satisfactorily settled upon Morgan's explanation that he had simply borrowed the articles and neglected to return them. Morgan was immediately re-arrested on the complaint of Aaron Ackley, innkeeper, for an unpaid board bill. This was for an amount less than five dollars. On the charge of debt Morgan was placed in the jail at Canandaigua on Monday evening, September 11, about ten o'clock.

Perhaps some explanation is necessary to the fact of Morgan's trouble and presence in Canandaigua, he having never resided there. It seems that in the preceding May, Morgan visited the Chapter in Canandaigua, stopping at the inn of Aaron Ackley, incurring the board bill claimed by the latter. On the same visit he supposedly borrowed the shirt and cravat of Ebenezer Kingsley. During the said visit, by special request, he sought the advice and counsel of Loton Lawson, relative to some special Chapter work which he, Morgan, intended to put on in the Batavia Chapter. He spent a day and a half at Lawson's home. These facts not only made it legally possible and necessary to bring Morgan to Canandaigua, but also at the same time brought the members of the Canandaigua Lodge into the scheme.

In those days a debtor could be imprisoned for debt. Any person paying the debt for said debtor could, upon presentation of legal receipt to the jailer, demand the debtor's release. Morgan stayed in jail from Monday night at ten o'clock until about the same hour on Tuesday night. At that hour, Chesebro came to the jail with a receipt for the payment of Morgan's debt to Ackley and demanded Morgan's release. After some little parleying with the jailer's wife, Mary W. Hall, Chesebro found it necessary to call in Colonel Sawyer. Lawson was present also. Upon receiving the receipt and the advice of Chesebro, Lawson, and Sawyer, Mrs. Hall finally consented to let Morgan depart from the jail with these three men.

That Morgan was fully aware of what was to happen we have ample proof. That he had consented voluntarily to all these proceedings we have well established authority. He was not coerced in the least, it being his own mind and wish. In the jail he inquired of his cellmate if the jailer was a Mason; also stated that if Lawson should prove a traitor, it would go hard with him (Morgan). Daniel Tallmadge was Morgan's cellmate. According to law, when these three men presented the receipt for the payment of Morgan's debt, they could demand and secure his legal release. When Morgan stepped out of the prison he was a free man. That he should accompany these three men, his liberators, in a closed carriage was his right and privilege.

¶ Hiram Hubbard, who kept a livery stable in Canandaigua, furnished the carriage (a yellow one) and a team of gray horses. The outfit was engaged and paid for in the usual business fashion. Hubbard, himself, did the driving, and drove the horses and carriage to Hanford's Tavern, about three miles below Rochester—a total of thirty miles. Burrage Smith and John Whitney, both of Rochester, came to Canandaigua that evening. Smith rode ahead on horseback, looking after the details of arrangements in advance. Whitney, Lawson, Chesebro, and perhaps Sawyer rode in the carriage with Morgan. The carriage stopped a few minutes at Braces, Victor, Mendon, and Pittsford.

James Gillis, a resident of Pennsylvania, who afterwards was indicted but never appeared for trial, met the party at Victor, where he was visiting his brother, and rode ahead. Ezra Platt, who kept a livery stable in Rochester, furnished a dark carriage and a team of bay horses. Platt was a Royal Arch Mason. He sent the carriage and horses, driven by a Mr. Parker, to Hanford's Tavern in advance of the Morgan party in Hubbard's carriage. At Hanford's Tavern the entire party got into Platt's carriage, and Hubbard returned to Canandaigua. This exchange took place about daylight.

The party reached Clarkson, fifteen miles west, about nine o'clock. It stopped at Baldwin's Tavern but a few minutes and in the middle of the street. This manner of stopping, together with the curtains of the carriage being drawn, caused marked attention. No one got out except the driver, who entered the hotel a short time, then drove on. At a point two and one-half miles west of the tavern, the party stopped to exchange horses. This fresh team was furnished by Captain Isaac Allen, who also drove the carriage as far as a mile beyond Gaines. The latter place was reached about twelve o'clock noon, but the carriage did not stop.

At this point, Elijah Mather took a team of horses belonging to his brother, James Mather, and hitched them to the same carriage, and he himself mounted the driver's seat. This excited attention along the highway, for he was a prominent business man. Mather drove this team as far as Morehouse's Tavern at Ridgeway ❧ ❧

At Ridgeway Jeremiah Brown, Supervisor and afterward a member of the Legislature, unhitched a team of horses from a harrow in his field, brought them to Morehouse's Tavern, fed them, and waited. When Mather's team drove up, they were exchanged for Brown's team in the middle of the street, and Brown mounted the box himself. About sundown, the party arrived at Wright's Tavern, several miles north of Lockport. Here the carriage was driven into a closed shed and guarded. A large number of Masons had assembled at this place and taken supper by previous arrangement. The party rested here until nearly ten o'clock, then departed with Brown still as driver. Mather continued with the party on to Lewiston. Mr. Wright, the innkeeper at Wright's Corners, was a Mason. Fearing an attack by an armed company of Anti-Masons while the party took supper and rested, he secured a company of Masons for guards ❧ ❧

The Morgan party reached Molineux's Tavern in Cambria, about six miles from Wright's, at eleven o'clock. Eli Bruce joined the party at Wright's ❧ John Whitney left the carriage at Wright's. Lawson left Morgan's carriage at Gaines and came by other conveyance to Wright's and Lockport.

At Cambria the party secured a fresh team from Molineux, but Brown continued as driver. Mather stayed at Molineux's Tavern over night. Bruce was in the carriage with Morgan from this place on to Lewiston, thirteen miles beyond.

At Lewiston, which they reached about one o'clock in the morning, coming seventy miles from Rochester since early the previous morning, the party stopped in front of the Frontier Tavern. Here another team and carriage was secured, and the transfer of Morgan and his escort was made in the middle of the street in front of Samuel Barton's dwelling house. Corydon Fox was the new driver. He was instructed to drive to Youngstown, a distance of six miles, and stop at the residence of Colonel King, Master of the Lewiston Lodge. Colonel William King joined the party, and the carriage with King, Bruce, Morgan, and another man, went to within eighty rods of the Fort (Niagara). Here the four passengers got out and sent Fox back to Lewiston with the carriage. This was on the night of the thirteenth, or rather the early morning of the fourteenth of September ❧ ❧

The Morgan party were rowed across the river and landed on the banks of the Canadian side. Orsamus Turner and Captain Jared Darrow had been to Canada some time before to make arrangements with some Masons there to meet the Morgan party. But when the two parties met, there were evidently some misunderstandings somewhere, so Morgan was brought back to Fort Niagara and placed in safety in one of the buildings. It was either in the old magazine, (which is most unlikely) or in the Block House, or else in the dungeon of the old Castle.

Edward Giddins, a confederate of Miller, the printer at Batavia, was the keeper of the Fort at this time. There were no soldiers there then, having been vacated some months before. Giddins had suggested to Turner and Darrow, upon their return from their mission into Canada, that Morgan be kept at the Fort in case there was any delay on the part of the Masons in Canada receiving him. Giddins was the ferry-man who took the Morgan party across into Canada and brought them back. For reasons, mentioned in following pages, the Canadian Masons refused to accept Morgan that night. He was kept in safety and comfort at the fort, under the immediate care and oversight of the Lewiston Masons. Elisha Adams, an elderly gentleman, was employed under Giddins to work around the Fort. Morgan was retained here from the fourteenth to the nineteenth of September. During Morgan's journey from Canandaigua to the fort, there was no coercion, no violence, no attack upon him. It was his own request that he be shielded from Miller, who might be in pursuit. It was with his own consent that he was kept from public view in the closed carriage. It was his own personal wish that a handkerchief be placed over his face at the latter end of the journey that he might not recognize the persons acting as escort. He was given all the physical comforts possible. Even at the fort he was the recipient of all that kindness could minister to him. The character of the men having him in care and the principles of the order which they represented are sufficient vouchers. The otherwise rumors of his repeated cries for "Water! Help! etc.," were nothing less than foul Anti-Masonic lies, propagated for evil purposes and designs.

On September 19, Morgan was taken across the river again under the safe and kindly escort of Colonel William King. With him, likely, were Major Parkhurst Whitney, a member of the Lewiston Lodge and Proprietor of the Eagle Hotel at the Falls; also Timothy Shaw, Noah Beach, William Miller, and Samuel M. Chubbuck. The five latter figured in a great trial in 1831. At Newark, opposite Fort Niagara, the party was met by a company of noble Masons from Canada. Morgan was given over to their delivery and charge. The place agreed upon was called Tribe's Hill, a remote section of Upper Canada in the Province of Ontario. When safely taken there, he was paid his promised five hundred dollars ❧ ❧

As was mentioned, Colonel King was among the party who took Morgan across the river and delivered him into the care of the Masons of Canada. Colonel King was very conscientious about the matter and secured from Morgan a full and clear statement of the matter, insisting upon a complete account of all the circumstances. Morgan was very happy and willing to state all he knew. To Colonel King's persistent inquiries, Morgan made the following statement:

" That he had contracted with Miller and others (the others being Davids and Dyer and Giddins), to write an expose of Masonry. That he had never been a Mason in any Lodge, but that he had received the Royal Arch Degree in a regular manner in the LeRoy Chapter, and felt bound by that obligation and never intended to reveal the secrets of those degrees; that he had been treated kindly by all those gentlemen who had formed his escort; that he was willing and anxious to be separated from Miller and from all ideas of Masonic expose; wished to live in habits of industry and respectability; to go to the interior of Canada and settle down as a respectable citizen and have his family sent to him; was sorry for the uproar his proceedings had made and for the disgrace he had caused his family."

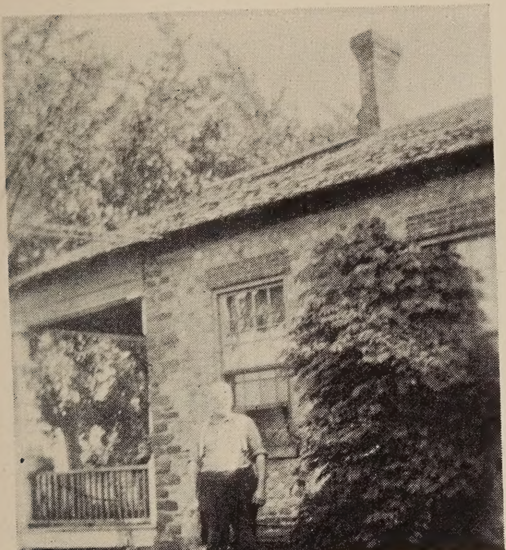
Morgan had been offered the option of a farm at Tribe's Hill, Canada, or five hundred dollars. He chose the money. The Masons of Canada furnished the five hundred dollars and offered the farm. The expenses on this side were met by the Masons on this side.

¶ Upon the second proclamation of Governor Clinton, October 26, 1826, offering a reward for the conviction of the offenders, and also for authentic information of the place where Morgan had been conveyed, Colonel King, thinking it would clear up all matters by bringing Morgan back, sent after him. King sent a confidential messenger into Canada to look for Morgan and bring him back. But Morgan had changed his clothes, bought a horse, and departed from the village in Canada within forty-eight hours of the departure from the village of those who escorted him there. Again King sent a second messenger, who employed an old Indian scout, thoroughly posted in his art, to follow Morgan up. It was learned that Morgan had gone east at the rate of fifty miles a day to a point down the river near Port Hope. There he sold his horse and disappeared. It is believed, beyond reasonable doubt, that he there boarded a British vessel and departed out of the country. That is the last trace of Morgan that has ever been obtained.

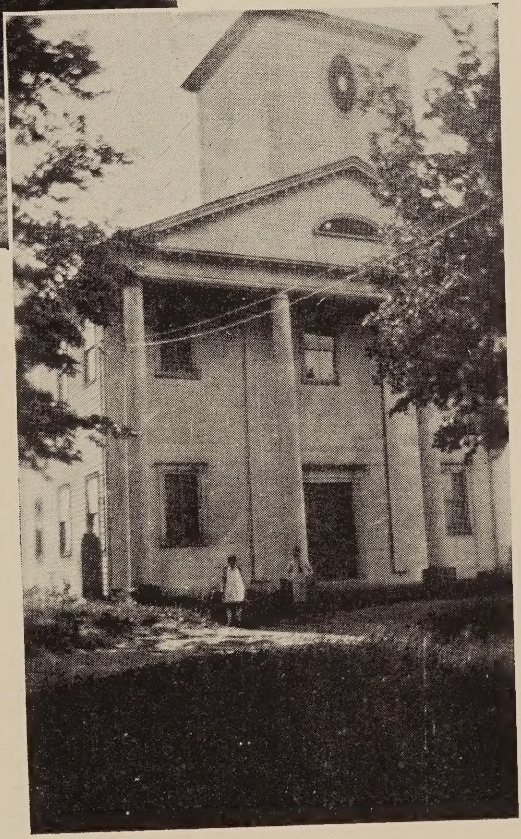
MASONS BETRAYED BY A PROFESSED MASON

IT was pointed out that there was a refusal on the part of the Masons of Canada to accept Morgan the first night he was taken across the river. Those who took him over that night were Colonel King, Eli Bruce, Mr. Haig, and Edward Giddins, the ferry-man. The same party returned within three hours, and Morgan was placed in one of the buildings at the Fort. This seemed quite satisfactory to Giddins, the keeper of the Fort. But why?

Edward Giddins claimed to be a Mason, had been connected with the Fort for some years, had lived in that vicinity for about ten years. Beyond doubt he was the man who visited Miller's printing office in August, suddenly departing and the same man that Miller claimed had been sent to his office by the Masons as a spy to purloin the copies of the manuscript. Later he was found a lively witness among the Seceding Masons, attending their conventions, taking part in preparing the full expose of all the secrets of Free

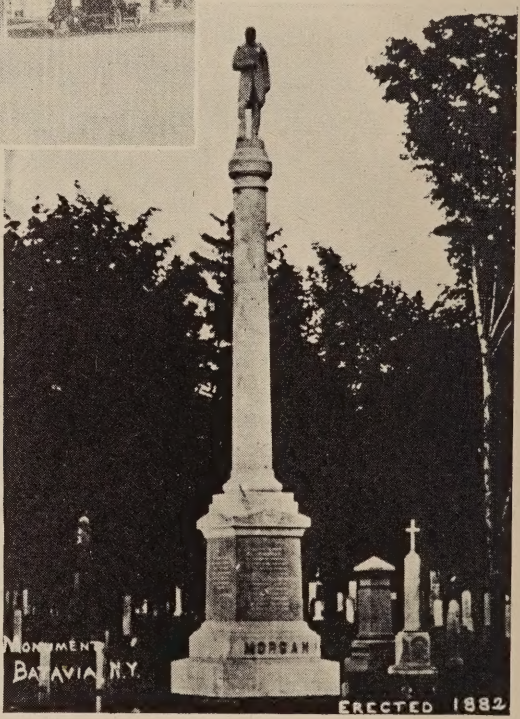


RESIDENCE OF
CAPTAIN
ISAAC ALLEN
RIDGE ROAD
NEAR
CLARKSON



BAPTIST CHURCH
AT
BETHANY CENTER

PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
AT
LE ROY, N. Y.


Monument
Batavia N.Y.
MORGAN
ERECTED 1882

MORGAN
MONUMENT
BATAVIA
CEMETERY
BATAVIA, N. Y.

Masonry; was found at work on many committees, aided in drafting a remonstrance both to the State Legislature and United States Congress, protesting against the "prostitution of Fort Niagara in incarcerating a private citizen by a party of men called Free Masons." For several years he published his notorious " Giddins' Anti-Masonic Almanac." He was the right hand tool of Miller, his confederate, spy, and " printer's devil " in the literal sense. His character was so tainted that in two, perhaps three of the great trials in court, his testimony was ruled out by the said courts.

This became evident only after the Masons had walked into his trap at the Fort. Giddins kept an inn near that place. Upon the return of Turner and Darrow from their mission to Canada to make arrangements for the reception of Morgan, they took supper with Giddins. They told him their mission. He suggested that Morgan be kept over night at the Fort in case the Masons on the other side should be delayed. Turner and Darrow returned to their homes in Lockport, their work being done. In the meantime, Giddins visited York, Canada, met some Masons such as: Garsides and Shedd, and formed a conspiracy not to accept Morgan on that side, and when Morgan was first taken over he was refused. Giddins wanted Morgan put in the Fort. It was he who shouted, "Murder!" not the Masons. It was he who desired the life of Morgan that he might charge it to the Masons. He betrayed those who trusted him, turned state's evidence, promulgated foul rumors, sought the arrest and conviction of those who meant no harm to Morgan. All this was clearly brought out in some of the trials which he caused to be brought against Morgan's escort. It required five days longer to complete the plans with the Canadian parties.

COPY OF THE RECORDS OF THE TRIAL OF THE ABDUCTORS OF MORGAN

(Authentic Copy furnished by the County Clerk of Ontario County, June 28, 1926).

AT a Court of Oyiz and Terminer and general jail delivery held in and for the County of Ontario at the Court House in Canandaigua on Monday the first day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight.

Present: Hon. Enos T. Troop, One of the Circuit Judges of the State of New York.
Hon. Nathaniel Howell, Hon. Aaron Younglove, Hon. Micah Brooks, Hon. Moses Atwater, Judges of County Courts of Ontario County.

The Court was opened as usual by Acclamation.

The People *vs.* Nicholas Chesebro, Edward Sawyer, Loton Lawson, John Sheldon, James Gillis

Indictment for kidnapping William Morgan.

¶ The Defendants, Nicholas G. Chesebro, Edward Sawyer, Loton Lawson, and John Sheldon, were here in Court, relinguished their plea heretofore pleaded and plead guilty to the Indictment.

* * *

The People *vs.* Nicholas G. Chesebro, Edward Sawyer, Loton Lawson, John Sheldon.

Indictment for Conspiring to Kidnap William Morgan, Riot, Assault and Battery on Wm. Morgan ❧ ❧

The Defendants being convicted on the said Indictment, the following witnesses were called and sworn in further explanation of the said offense:

Lucinda Morgan, Wm. R. Thompson, Wm. Blossom, Richard Wells, Corydon Fox, Timothy Fitch, Elisha Hubbell, John Brownell, Halloway Hayward, James D. Bemis, Thomas Beach, Israel R. Hall.

The Court sentenced the Said Loton Lawson to imprisonment in the Ontario County Gaol for a term of two years.

The Court sentenced the Said Nicholas G. Chesebro to imprisonment in the Ontario County Gaol for a term of one year.

The Court sentenced the said John Sheldon to imprisonment in the County Gaol for a term of three months.

The Court sentenced the Said Edward Sawyer to imprisonment in the County Gaol for a term of one calendar month.

◆ ◆

The People *vs.* Nicholas G. Chesebro, Edward Sawyer, Loton Lawson, John Sheldon, James Gillis ◆ ◆

Indictment for Kidnapping

Court directed that a Nolle Prosequi be entered on this indictment.

Note: John Sheldon took no part in the affair. He was a self-confessed abductor. His own statements were contradictory, and no witnesses or evidence were against him. He was a Morgan " maniac."

John Gillis who lived in Pennsylvania, happened to be visiting his brother, Enos Gillis at Victor. He was accused of mounting a horse at Victor and going as " advance guard." He never was sent for the trial, and he never had a hearing.

◆ ◆

Trial of Eli Bruce, Orsamus Turner, and Gared Darrow

Ontario General Sessions, Canandaigua, N. Y.
August 20, 1829

Present: Hon. Nathaniel W. Howell. Hon. Chester Loomis, Hon. John Price, Hon. Samuel Rawson, Judges of the County Courts of Ontario County.

The People *vs.* Eli Bruce, Orsamus Turner, Jared Darrow.

Indictment for a Conspiracy to kidnap and carry away William Morgan from the County of Ontario to parts unknown.

Counsel for the people, Daniel Moseley, Esq., special commissioner, Bowen Whiting, District Attorney, Charles Butler.

Counsel for the Defendant: Dudley Marvin and Mark H. Sibley, of Canandaigua; William H. Adams, of Lyons, Vincent Matthews, and Ebenezer Griffin, of Rochester.

Jurors: Hiram Anson, Nathan Cary, Jasper W. Beet, Levi Smith, Amusa Spencer, John Stults, Evert Green, Abraham Dodge, Henry Lincoln, Daniel Short, John Bennal, Jun. and Samuel Reed.

Witnesses: Israel R. Hall, Jeffery Chipman, Halloway Hayward, Mary W. Hall, Willis Turner, Hiram Hubbard, Ezra Platt, Harry Olmstead, Silas Walker, Silas Walbridge, Sarah Wilder, William Cooper, Solomon C. Wright, William Mollineux, Corydon Fox, Ebenezer Perry, Elisha Adams, John Jackson.

¶ Edward Giddins appeared as witness, but " the court unanimously decided that he was not a competent witness." In summing up for the people, Mr. Whiting stated, " that the bill against Turner and Darrow had been founded on the testimony of Giddins alone, and that he having been excluded, the prosecution has no evidence against them."*

" The jury returned a verdict of guilty against Bruce, and NOT GUILTY in favor of Turner and Darrow."

" The court suspended their judgment against Bruce in order to take the advice of the Supreme Court on some important question of law which was raised during the trial."

Eli Bruce was afterwards sentenced to a short imprisonment in Ontario County jail. After serving about six months of his sentence, he was pardoned by the Governor.

Niagara Special Court
February 24, 1831
Held at Lockport, New York

The People *vs.* Parkhurst Whitney, Timothy Shaw, Noah Beach, William Miller, Samuel M. Chubbock.

The Honorable SAMUEL NELSON, one of the Justices of the Supreme Court, Presiding.

Counsel for the People: Victory Birdseye, Special Counsel, E. Ransom, Jr., District Attorney of Niagara, and Bates Cook, Esq.

Counsel for the Defendants: Messrs. Griffin and Matthews, of Rochester, William H.

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*Note:—Edward Giddins, the supposed "confederate spy" of Miller, a signer of the " Declaration of Independence of Masonry," and the publisher of "Anti-Masonic Almanac," was the keeper of the Magazine at Fort Niagara.

Adams, of Lyons, Wayne County, and James F. Mason, of Lockport.

The indictment contains four counts:

1st For assault and battery upon one William Morgan, and for falsely imprisoning him.
2nd A conspiracy to falsely imprison him.
3rd A conspiracy to assault, imprison, and transport the said William Morgan, and carry him to parts unknown.
4th And also, for the false imprisonment and abduction of the said William Morgan.

Names of the Jurors empanelled:

Thomas Comstock, Josiah Talbot, John Smith, David Adams, Daniel Howel, Squire Williams, Westly Laverty, Jacob Hall, John H. Waterman, Levi S. Smith, Charles P. Halsey, Edward Bissel.

❧ ❧

Edward Bissel was a Royal Arch Mason. He was asked in the challenge if the Royal Arch obligation was the same in substance as that read in the court from Bernard's " Light on Masonry " to which he replied: " The oaths I took were materially different; murder and treason were expressly excepted, and there was nothing said in the oaths I have taken about political preferment, nor about voting for another Mason in preference to any other man, as mentioned in the book ". . . " In legal proceedings, I should feel myself under no obligations on any account to favor a brother Mason more than any other man" . . . " The whole tenor and objects of the lectures and other proceedings, is to inculcate a strict obedience to the laws of the country, and a faithful observance of the rules of morality and religion."

* * *

Among the witnesses were:

Loton Lawson, John Whitney, Mrs. Mary W. Hall (wife of the jailer at Canandaigua), Willis Turner, Hiram Hubbard, Eli Bruce, John Jackson, James A. Sheldon (one of Giddins' conspirators), Dr. Gustavus W. Pope, (a Royal Arch Mason), Bates Cook, (a member of the "38 Committee"), Edward Giddins, (Miller's confederate and conspirator, and keeper of Ft. Niagara), Orsamus Turner, (formerly tried and acquitted), Edwin Scranton, Kneeland Townsend, (a signer of the " Declaration of Independence from Masonry"), Alexander Stewart, John Barton, Amos Bronson.

As in a previous trial held in Canandaigua, the entire testimony of Edward Giddins was ruled out of court. The moral character of the man disqualified his testimony. In the Argument of William H. Adams, counsel for the Defendants, the whole scheme of Giddins' conspiracy to murder Morgan himself was portrayed with an eloquence almost equal to a Daniel Webster. It is clearly in evidence from Adams' logical argument, that he himself knew the whole truth on both sides. He clearly apprehended the hellish purpose and plot of Miller, Giddins, and their lesser confederates, to do away with Morgan, and thus make a huge financial gain. And Adams well understood the purpose and methods of the Masons in conveying Morgan to a place of safety in Canada. To Adams, more than any other, belongs the credit and honor of securing the just acquittal of accused Masons, in indictments involving the most horrible crimes.

The trial lasted one week. After the attorneys had summed up their arguments, Judge Sawyer in clear style gave his charge to the jury. Tuesday morning, March 4, " The jury returned a verdict of NOT GUILTY, as to two of the Defendants, Timothy Shaw and William Miller. Tuesday evening the jury was discharged, not being able to agree as to the other Defendants."

Thus, after nearly five years of almost unceasing hounding, arrests, and trials, it here came to an end. That Morgan had been murdered never found legal proof—because there was no proof to find.

ROLL CALL OF ROYAL AND SELECT MASONS

WE have seen the motive and method of removing William Morgan from his danger in Batavia to his chosen place of safety in Canada. In this remarkable program there was no pecuniary reward, no revengeful spite, no abuse on the person of Morgan. That it was thoroughly planned and systematically carried out can not be denied. The incidents from the tenth of September to the nineteenth of the same month from Donald's Tavern in Batavia via Canandaigua, Rochester, over the Ridge Road, through Lockport, to Fort Niagara, the five days' stopoff there, across the River, and finally to Tribe's Hill, Canada are, without doubt, the most dramatic in all Free Masonry. This historic, history-making, dramatic journey is without parallel in the history of all Masonry. ¶ Likewise the falsehoods, calumnies, vituperations, dissensions, persecutions, turmoils, frenzies, following its path, have never been equalled in our country. Every inch of the one hundred and twenty miles covered between Batavia, en route to Canandaigua, thence to Fort Niagara was bound to be a test of the strength of Masonry as it was eventually matched against its frenzied foes. ¶ That it took place is well known in history. How it was done, was and has been known to but a few. Why it was done, has had different versions from friend, foe, and the indifferent. Who the chief actors were on this stage of drama, not merely their names but their characters, must answer today.

ELI BRUCE

At the head of this roll of Royal and Select Masons intelligent appreciation and justice must place the name of Eli Bruce, Sheriff of Niagara County. One of the charter members of Niagara Lodge, No. 345, later when Lockport Lodge, No. 73 was organized, became a charter member there. Bruce Chapter of R. and A. M., now in Lockport was named after him. Bruce was in all respects an exemplary man and Mason. The victim of Giddins' foul betrayal for his heroic and kindly part in the removal of Morgan, he was arrested and tried in Canandaigua Court. Read his testimony and you will see him standing squarely and uprightly. Caught in the technicality of the law purposely by the enemy, as a public officer, he was found guilty, sentenced to jail (shortly afterward pardoned by the Governor) and also deposed from office. But that was not all his suffering. At one time a party or gang of forty Anti-Masons came during the night to his residence back in the country to lynch him. But Bruce, receiving warning, had escaped. He finally had to leave New York State and moved to Illinois, where he died.

Colonel William King

Next to Bruce, Colonel William King plays the most conspicuous part. He was the first Master of Niagara Lodge, No. 345, at Lewiston; was Master of ceremonies at the laying of the corner-stone of Lewiston Academy in 1825; was also a member of the State Legislature in 1826. He and Bruce were side by side in conceiving the plans for Morgan's escape. King, with his masterly mind, brotherly heart, and strong arm met the foul treachery of Giddins at the Fort and offset the opposition the latter stirred up on the Canadian side. Though never indicted, he suffered heroic martyrdom. Soon after Morgan's departure he received the appointment of sutler at Cantonment Towson, situated on the Kiamesis, a high branch of the Red River, on the border of Texas. He immediately moved there to discharge his public duties in the employ of the Federal Government. Miller and his disciples looked upon him as a fine victim for the sacrifices, " and the capture and return through almost all the Western States with him as prisoner, would afford employment to some of the leaders of the crusade, as well as be calculated to sow the fruitful seeds of Anti-Masonry in those States through which they would pass." It was among their rumors that he had been concerned in the abduction of Morgan, and was a fugitive from justice. The captors, with a warrant for his arrest, started in pursuit of him. However, he learned beforehand of their coming before they reached the Cantonment. He immediately started back to New York in defense of his character. Upon his return he stood, not as a prisoner, " but fearless and erect among them for the purpose of vindicating his character." Shortly after his return he died.

John Whitney

John Whitney was a resident of Rochester and a true Mason. He first interviewed Morgan in Batavia, and was the person who really got the removal under way. Even with Morgan he was manly, brave, kind, and trustworthy. His word was his honor. He was close to Bruce in working out the details in the entire scheme. A victim of blackmail, perjury, and persecution, he stood like a man. He was arrested, indicted, but with Burrage Smith, a fellow companion, was acquitted. Bernard and his " Amen Corner," pious dupes, circulated the false rumor that Whitney had absconded and left his family in destitute circumstances.

ORSAMUS TURNER AND CAPTAIN JARED DARROW

Orsamus Turner was a member of the Lockport Lodge, editor of a paper, Historian of the Holland Land Company, and member of the Board of Education. Solid in character, broad in intelligence, enjoying the well-deserved confidence of all who knew him, he with Captain Darrow, a likewise honorable man and Mason, went to Canada to locate friends, friendship, and a friendly place for a broken, fallen man to begin life over again. And they had their characters assailed and reputations dragged through the mud. Arrested, indicted, and tried in Canandaigua, but defended by that most noble attorney, William H. Adams of Lyons, they were acquitted. Their chief accuser and witness against them was Edward Giddins, with whom they took supper at Fort Niagara. Giddins' whole testimony was thrown out of court ❧ ❧

THE HIGHWAY COMMITTEE

The Brother Masons along the highway enroute to Lewiston deserve passing mention. Remote from the troubles, nothing to gain, they were ready and loyal to furnish ways and means. Ezra Platt, Captain Isaac Allen, Elijah Mather, Jeremiah Brown, Solomon C. Wright, Captain William Molineux, Hiram Hubbard, all made their contributions, played their brief parts, and made their exits.

CHESEBRO, LAWSON AND SAWYER

All these were residents and Masons of Canandaigua. For diplomacy, executive skill, heroism, and self-sacrifices, these men deserve respect and admiration. Apprehended as parties, they never flinched. Arrested, indicted, and tried, they told the truth and made no denials. Found guilty of abduction by the jury, they made no appeals. Each served his sentence without murmur. The only hope they had was that posterity, with a fuller knowledge, should acquit them of the crime for which they were sentenced.

MAJOR PARKHURST WHITNEY, TIMOTHY SHAW, NOAH BEACH, WILLIAM MILLER, AND SAMUEL CHUBBOCK

This noble band of Select Masons of the Lewiston Lodge rendered a priceless service to Masonry. With original plans thwarted by Giddins' treachery, they took up the daring work of bringing matters to a glorious finish. Betrayed into the hands of an organized, conscienceless gang by Giddins, apprehended, indicted, and tried in the Lockport Courts, they never cowered. Major Whitney was the pioneer hotel keeper of the Eagle Tavern in Niagara Falls. He was a man of high honor and shared the confidence and respect of all. And the rest were not one whit below him in nobility and genuine worth. Under the able counsel of Attorney William

H. Adams, they were finally acquitted and discharged. Here again Giddins' testimony was thrown out of court.

BROTHER MASONS IN CANADA

The names of these fellow-burden bearers we do not possess. The name or names of their Lodge have not been furnished us. To these men American Masons owe a debt of gratitude. Brother Masons are always one in mind and heart, though under different flags. The language of Free Masonry is a universal tongue. They heard the cry of Masonic distress and call for help. To it they gave a hearty response. To accept Morgan, who was far from being worthy, and with the same motive as our Masons in giving him another chance to make good, furnishing him with the means and opportunity, was a most noble act. Their glory, like ours, was dimmed for decades. Instead, they, like us, received calumnies and persecutions.

ATTORNEY WILLIAM H. ADAMS

William H. Adams belonged to Lyons, N. Y. And it is to be inferred that he was a member of that Lodge. His services rendered the cause of justice and the vindication of Masonry have not been fully appraised. His keen, logical, judicial loyalty to justice, truth, and love; his matchless ability to discern, discover, and lay bare treachery; his accurate conclusion of the most diabolical plot of conspiracy on the part of the persecutors; his consistent belief in the real principles of Masonry and confidence in the characters of its members; his real knowledge of the whole affair; his matchless skill in weaving together isolated and segregated facts into a strong fabric; his love of decency and hatred of hypocrisy; with all these mighty weapons in his legal right arm he uncovered the improvised garments of diabolical treachery and hellish conspiracy, and exposed the cowing cowards before the great tribunals of justice, securing acquittals and vindications of the wrongly accused. It was William H. Adams who prevented the high legal courts of New York from rendering the verdict of the most heinous of all crimes, MURDER, against American Free Masonry.

BATAVIA LODGE, No. 433

BATAVIA Lodge No. 433 was installed December 19, 1825, the ceremony taking place in St. James Episcopal Church. The first lodge was installed in Batavia, May 30, 1811, at the tavern of William Keyes, “in virtue of a Warrant of Installation, given by the Most Worshipful, the Hon. DeWitt Clinton, Esq., Grand Master of Masons of the State of New York to our Worthy Brother, Charles Little of Avon, Past Master of Genesee Lodge No. 130. It was called Olive Branch Lodge. Up to December 21, 1813, the Lodge was working under a dispensation. At the latter date Olive Branch Lodge, No. 215, was formally instituted under a regular charter. Richard Smith was the first Master. This Lodge continued in Batavia up to December 14, 1820. Because of internal dissensions and depleted membership caused by formation of a number of other Lodges in the adjacent country, the Lodge was then moved to East Bethany, six miles away. Again in 1824, the Batavia Masons desired a Lodge of their own. The

East Bethany members retained the name of Olive Branch Lodge. The petition for the new Lodge in Batavia is dated November 4, 1824. The dispensation was granted April 30, 1825. The first meeting was held in Eagle Tavern of Bissel Humphrey, located on the present site of the Richmond Hotel. Dr. John Cotes was the first person to be made a Mason by the new Lodge.

At the outbreak of the Morgan trouble the following members composed the new Lodge, No. 433:

William Seaver, *Master* Richard Martin, *Sec.*
Richard Smith, *Treasurer*
Henry Brown, *Senior Warden*
Dr. Jones S. Billings, *Junior Warden*

Blanchard Powers
Dr. Richard Dibble
Dr. Ephraim Brown
Dr. John Z. Ross
Sheriff Wm. Thompson
Benjamin C. Adams
Samuel Graven
Orange Allen
John Willis
Benjamin Porter, Sr.
Alfred Pember
Ephraim Towner
Rev. Lucius Smith
Johnson Goodwill
John Lamberton
Philo W. Stocking
Alba Burnham
John Chatfield
Dr. John Cotes
Nathan Follett
Charles C. Church
Joseph W. C. Coffin
John Foote
Wray T. Palmer
Amos Parker
Nahum Loring
Fredrick Follett
Benjamin F. Towner
Hezekiah E. Platt
Joel Chandler

Peter Daw
John S. Ganson
Cotton Denis
Leicester Stone
Jason Grettan
Daniel H. Chandler
Lyman Swift
George E. Martin
Joseph Clark
Jabez Sarves
Nathan Townsend
Daniel Latimer
Daniel Tisdale
John Shwerman
Kelsey Stone
Benjamin Blodgett
Dr. John Hubbard
Benjamin Stetson
Robert Clark
Joseph Nixon
Ebenezer Mix
Simeon C. Steele
Joseph Baker
Silas Finch
Abner Pratt
Benjamin Allen
George Metzger
Lewis Swift
Farley Paine
Simeon Cumings
Samuel C. Holden
Joseph W. Churchill
Horace Seaver
Phineas Dodge
Phineas Silsby
Thomas McCully
John Wilson
George D. Davis

George W. Harris, afterwards marrying the widow of Morgan, was expelled by the Lodge, August 15, 1826. Samuel D. Greene was expelled February 4, 1827. The names of Harris and Greene are not included in the above list. Nathan Townsend and Jason Grettan, whose names appear in the above roll, afterwards renounced the institution and joined the " Seceding Masons." It is worthy of notice that of the list of seventy-six members, seventy-two remained loyal throughout all the storm, the LOYAL SEVENTY-TWO.

¶ What a representative body of men! The

President of the village; Rector of the Episcopal Church; five County Judges of Court; six village trustees; thirteen members of School Boards; eight members of the fire company; an editor; the founder of a private school; the sheriff; six physicians; a Justice of the Peace; the father of Rear Admiral Chandler of the U. S. Navy; prominent church officers; those who afterwards served as District Attorney, County Treasurer, Surrogate, and members of the State Legislature. ¶ Then see the calibre of men in the Olive Branch Lodge at East Bethany: Five Judges of high courts; nine physicians; five clergymen, among whom was Rev. Ives, afterwards Bishop Ives (Episcopal) of North Carolina; one State Senator; member of Congress; three members of Assembly; sheriff; Treasurer; Surrogate; two founders of an Academy. ¶ Against such did Miller, Giddins, Bernard, Thurlow, Weed, Southwick and their kind, bring their charges of immoral, unchristian, unpatriotic conduct and purpose; the infamous accusation of deliberate and willful murder of Morgan. How absurd! What ridiculous nonsense!

Such was the garrison that held the Masonic Fort with their guns of Silence, Fearlessness, Self-Control, Fortitude, and Composure, never deviating from principles; never swerving to right or left; never resorting to intrigue, trickery, or viciousness; never hauling the flag down nor making any capitulation to the enemy. While Anti-Masonry bombarded, the old garrison never surrendered.

Let the millions of Brother Masons today pay these Brethren the silent tribute of gratitude and respect.

THE
MORGAN MONUMENT

THE Political Anti-Masonic party went down to inglorious defeat within six years. This hobby was abandoned by even the lowest grade of politicians. In it their unholy designs utterly failed. It soon proved itself unfit to guide the Ship of State.

¶ But another set of men took up the cause against Masonry. It was a set of traveling mendicants and ministers of the Gospel, who went peddling about throughout the country this specie of quackery. " When Bernard, Stone, and their satellites took possession of Anti-Masonry as a religious hobby, churches were made to resemble the Spanish Inquisition. Christians were denounced, not so much because they were Masons, but because they would not denounce, abuse, and anathematize all other Masons who did not renounce Masonry."

The excitement, growing out of the " Morgan Affair," persuaded many minds that the whole Institution of Free Masonry was corrupt and vile. In the name of religion, and to save the Christian church, this humbuggery and quackery was taught in religious circles quite universally for half a century. Why the church should be so fertile and so receptive soil for such a crop of weeds, is difficult to explain. A set of unprincipled renegade Masons became a band of contemptible parasites, feeding upon the generous soul and untutored mind of the church.

An organization, calling itself the " National Christian Association," grew out of this perverted function of the church. In 1882, just fifty-six years after Morgan's disappearance, a monument was erected in the Batavia cemetery to the memory of Morgan, under the auspices of this organization. Contributions for its erection were made by twenty-six of the States and Territories of the United States, as well as from Canada. It is located in the southwest corner of the cemetery, and supposed to be on the David C. Miller lot. It was dedicated September 13, 1882. The Association assembled in Batavia for a three days' conference.

The dedication took place by the monument, and was attended by more than one thousand persons ❧ ❧

A grave on the lot, representing that of Morgan, was decorated with the word "Morgan " in floral letters.

The exercises were opened with a hymn composed for the occasion.

The last stanza was:

> "And let our monument proclaim—
> That Morgan is a martyr's name,
> Till heart and home from sea to sea
> Shout from the dark lodge bondage free."

The main feature of the program was a series of addresses, fitting to the sentiment of the occasion. Among the speakers was Judge Taggart, of Batavia. He was among the list of the first Seceding Masons which met in Convention at LeRoy in 1828, fifty-four years before. Mrs. Emiline J. Mather, of Canandaigua was also a speaker. Others were a Dr. Roy of Atlanta, Georgia; Rev. E. T. Roberts of Rochester; Professor Blanchard of Chicago; and F. M. Capwell of Dale, N. Y.

A three-days' Anti-Masonic convention opened its first session the evening before, and was attended by several hundred delegates from various parts of the United States and Canada. The convention was marked by no interruptions or interferences on the part of any of the good citizens of Batavia.

The Masons of Batavia on that occasion offered no hindrance, interference, or resistance, whatever, to the purpose of the gathering. Neither has the monument been molested these forty-eight years since its erection.

INSCRIPTIONS ON THE MORGAN MONUMENT

South Tablet

"Sacred to the Memory of
Wm. Morgan
A Native of Virginia
A Capt. in the War of 1812
A Respectable Citizen of
Batavia and a Martyr
To the Freedom of Writing,
Printing, and Speaking the
Truth. He was abducted
From near this spot in the
Year 1826 By Free Masons
And Murdered for revealing the
secrets of their Order.

East Tablet

Erected by Volunteer
Contributions from over
2000 Persons residing in
Canada, Ontario,
And twenty-six of the
United States
And Territories

North Tablet

The Court Records of
Genesee County
And files of the
BATAVIA ADVOCATE

Kept in the Recorder's
Office Contain the History
Of the events that caused
The Erection of this
Monument.

West Tablet

"The bane of our civil
Institutions is to be Found
In Masonry, Already
Powerful, And daily becoming
More so** I owe to my
Country an Exposure of
Its Dangers."
CAPT. WM. MORGAN

What a collossal piece of monumental folly! What a waste of misdirected energy! What an embezzlement of sentiment! What a misappropriation of religious zeal! What a granite statue of negation—doing Masonry no harm, and the cause of religion no good!

Such a contortion of chiseled inscriptions to be read by well informed posterity. There never was the faintest rumor that Morgan was abducted from that spot. Instead it was a well established fact that he departed mysteriously from the Canandaigua jail fifty miles away. That he was murdered by Free Masons or any one else was never legally proved ❧ ❧

Why should Genesee County contain the

records of the legal proceedings of Ontario County, where the legal trial was rightfully held? The *Batavia Advocate* was Miller's paper, and the files kept are the products of his own treacherous mind and thwarted pen. ¶ The statement put on the lips of Morgan on the West Tablet is so spurious that it hardly deserves attention. While sufficiently perverted, yet we question his mental ability to phrase such a statement. The charge in the statement is too false to need a repudiation ❧ ❧

The monument, as it stands today, is a memorial to the ignorance, prejudice, ill-will, and bitterness of those who were responsible for its erection. That it stands unmolested all these years is a monument to the charity, tolerance, integrity, and honor of Free Masonry. It is to be sincerely hoped that some day the rightful parties, recognizing the error and folly, will see that the monument is taken down and the materials used for something more worthy and ennobling. In this, Free Masons have neither wish nor inclination to take part.

Some of the banners, signs and paraphernalia, used at the dedication of the Morgan monument, were gathered up and are still in the possession of the Batavia Lodge, as souvenirs of the harmless event.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

THAT the chief actor in the century-old drama against Free Masonry, is none other than David C. Miller, should be clear to the mind of every unbiased, thoughtful reader. That his motives and purposes, and his methods are no longer obscure, we are well assured. The attempted program of himself and confederates is described in detail in other chapters.

That Morgan ever was a Mason there is no known record in any Lodge. Besides, we have his own voluntary statement to the contrary. All incidents connected with the affair clearly substantiate this belief. Plainly he was a victim of Miller, and dupe of his confederates. His intemperance, profligacy, and untrustworthiness brought him into Miller's trap and caused his downfall.

That Morgan was murdered there never was established any legal proof. Three of his escorts, requested by Morgan himself, and provided by the Masons, were tried before the Ontario County Court and found guilty on the charge of abduction. It is evident that their real mission as escorts found no evidence in the trial and had no weight in the court. The atmosphere was not friendly to Free Masonry. Perhaps a silent defense, yielding submissively to the Court's interpretation and verdict, leaving the vindication to posterity, was the only and wise prerogative.

How extremely ridiculous to suppose that any Mason or body of Masons should ever attempt to take the life of a man because he attempted to divulge the secrets of Free Masonry. Even in the Anti-Mason's so-called expose of Free Masonry, there was not established one word of proof that it was the duty of one Mason to murder another Mason, who reveals the secrets of the order. And every Mason knows, or should know, that there is not a word of the kind, in the written or oral codes, in all the degrees of Masonry.

¶ How absurd that men, not Masons, should ever have put credence and reliance upon the professed developments and program of renouncing Masons. For these renouncing Masons, according to their own affirmations, could not and did not, make the expose without committing willful and base perjury. "Who dare believe a man on oath, who violates, voluntarily, an oath, voluntarily made, in order to give testimony?" And how much less credence can be attached, when it is self-evident that the object was to make money, and gain political predomination by such perjury.

The substrata and basic foundation of Free Masonry are not its " Oaths and Secrets." That every Mason knows, or should know. It stands on something more substantial and enduring. The exposure of its oaths and secrets is not its vulnerable spot. It was a piece of trickery and deceit thrust into gullible minds. What if Miller and his confederates did publish such a book. It was not the first event of its kind. His book, together with that of the Anti-Masons, was a reproduction of what had appeared years before in another country. Free Masonry was neither destroyed nor weakened by either. All such would-be assassins have gone down in shame and defeat ❧ ❧

Batavia Masons were the same as all Masons everywhere. For them there is no claim for superior degrees in wisdom or goodness. Good Masons everywhere would have acted with wisdom, discretion, valor, courage, and honesty. The challenge and ordeal were neither sought nor invited. Circumstances inevitable brought the greatest Masonic crisis in America to their temple. If it is the candid verdict of Free Masonry of today in saying, " They Wrought Well," it is enough.

At the close of the century we can calmly look back upon the past, we are privileged to own and behold the present and prophesy the future. We humbly acknowledge that our beloved institution received a chastening. For the number of unprincipled and unworthy men found in our Lodges in those days of furor and excitement, proves how carelessly the doors were guarded. The unprepared entered our doors; the careless took upon themselves the sacred obligations; the insincere knelt at our altars. " For the neglect of our sacred duty; our Order has received a chastening." That Masonry is better understood today we are both certain and glad. That it is worthy of a large place in our great nation, its present prosperity is ample testimony. Masonry is not a conspiracy, but an institution which " devotes all her benign energy and influence to ennobling the souls of men." It has its altar, but seeks not the demolishing of other altars; it cultivates its own friendships, but inculcates no hatred for others; within its ranks there is sweet reasoning; and it holds no bitterness or intolerance to those outside; the strong right arm of help to those within is never lifted to crush those without its circle.

" On him, this corner-stone we build,
On him, this edifice erect;
And still, until this work's fulfilled,
May He, the workman's ways direct."

THE SECEDING MASONS

IT was early in October, 1826. A great excitement had started in Batavia over the sudden and mysterious disappearance of a man by the name of Morgan. A special meeting of the Masonic Lodge at Pavilion, twelve miles from Batavia, was called. The object of the meeting was to “ concert measures for an agreement among the fraternity in what they should say in relation to their outrages, and to attend to any members who were disaffected with their proceedings.” A certain member, who had been expressing his opposition to its principles and the recent conduct of the fraternity in a free and open manner, attended this meeting for the purpose of freeing his mind. When the Lodge was opened and the subject disapproved. “ The meeting ” he says, “was long and horribly interesting. For the honest expression of my sentiments, I was most shamefully abused.”

He was requested to attend the next meeting of the Lodge. " Here," he says, " a scene passed which language can not describe. Several hours were occupied in abusing and making charges against me. Soon after I left them they expelled and immediately commenced a most wicked persecution against me. The professed ministers of Christ, infidels, and drunkards, from Albany to Buffalo, were united to destroy my character."

The building in which these stormy meetings were held, is still standing in Pavilion. Though almost unknown to the last several generations, it was popularly known as Morgan Hall. It is a brick structure, and the Lodge room is in the attic, reached by an outside stairway. The Lodge shortly afterwards dissolved. Since then the building has been used as a private dwelling. The Lodge room is still as it was then, and the benches then used are yet there. The building is yet in good preservation and is one of the few century-old landmarks of Masonry left in the path of that great cyclone area of the greatest episode in American Masonry.

In this attic Lodge room a great storm against Free Masonry broke out. The smouldering coals of dissension burst out in furious flame. This disaffected member stepped outside of the Lodge into open hostility. " Let the reader remember," he says, " that the compiler of this work ('Light on Masonry'), renounced Masonry in October, 1826—was the first Mason who declared open hostility to the institution subsequent to the abduction of Morgan."

This meeting was held within a few weeks after the Morgan excitement began in Batavia. All the controversies and dissensions grew out of that affair. The furor of that time was not restricted to the rank and multitude outside of Free Masonry. Not a little arose within and was carried to the outside. At that time many who were Masons by name stepped outside its ranks, " and walked no more in " Masonry. Many withdrew quietly without fuss, fury or publicity, keeping their vows and pledges inviolate. The integrity of such commands our respect and deserves our tolerance. But certain others did otherwise. These styled themselves in all possible publicity as " Seceding Masons." It is with this class this article deals.

This being the one hundred and fourth anniversary of this particular crisis in Masonry, it may not be entirely out of order to bring certain facts before the brethren today. The purpose is not to hold these men up to ridicule and scorn by the method of vituperative attack, but rather by laying the facts before open minds, that enlightened and sweet reasoning may sit on the throne of judgment.

¶ That this movement began in the vicinity of Batavia—the storm center—only a few weeks after the Morgan trouble started, is no surprise, as being a Mason just then and there was not " all sunshine and glory."

How much and how far these men were influenced by popular feeling and excitement can not be estimated. What hopes of popular reward served as impelling motives can not be asserted. But the unpopular wave against Free Masonry served as no hindrance to their secession. Free Masonry never bolts its doors against those who wish to make their exit.

This movement, as in all cases, had an outstanding leader, who initiated the same and directed its policy and program with untiring zeal. This leader is none other than the " disaffected member " in the Lodge at Covington. Perhaps it is just and fair to credit him with pure and conscientious motives. How greatly he erred in logic, and failed in his judgment is perfectly clear to all real and well-informed Masons of today.

In his own words we introduce him to the readers ❧ ❧

" During several years the compiler of (' Light on Masonry ') was a member of the Masonic fraternity. While he regarded the ceremonies of the order with disgust and its oaths with abhorrence, he supposed that there existed principles in the institution which were pure and holy. In the peculiar providence of God, he was led to investigate the subject. He found it wholly corrupt; its morals a shadow; its benevolence, selfishness; its religion, infidelity; and that as a system, it was an engine of Satan; calculated to enslave the children of men and pour contempt on the Most High.”

The zeal, antipathy and furor of Elder Bernard against Masonry never abated one whit, even in his old age. Forty years afterwards, he returned to the same locality for a visit among old friends. At that return he delivered his fiery lecture against Free Masonry in the local Baptist Church of Pavilion. Said the Hon. Louis Wells of Pavilion to the author recently, “ I heard Elder Bernard give his fiery lecture when I was but a tiny boy. The impressions have been lasting. I thought, as a mere lad, if all those things are true that he is saying against Masonry, and if he was once a Mason himself, why is he telling it?” Mr. Wells is a member of the LeRoy Lodge, and a former member of the State Legislature, and is the only person the author found who had ever heard Elder Bernard ❧ ❧

Such were the findings of Free Masonry by Reverend David Bernard, the leader of “Seceding Masons.” At that time he was pastor of the Baptist Church in Warsaw, N. Y., about twenty-five miles from Batavia. He was in good standing in his denomination, and his Christian character was well recommended by his own church “ as a man of strict integrity, unblemished moral character, and a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus.”

According to his own affirmation he was a member of the Lodge at Covington, (no longer in existence) was a Royal Arch Mason, and had " entered the Lodge of Perfection and took the ineffable degrees." As per his own statement, being dissatisfied and disgusted with Masonry when the Morgan trouble burst forth into flame, he took the side of the outside rabble, claiming persecution. " Free Masonry," he says, "as a system, is dark, unfruitful, selfish, demoralizing, blasphemous, murderous, anti-republican, and anti-Christian—opposed to the glory of God and the good of mankind." That Elder Bernard did not drink deeply at the Masonic springs, and for him a " little learning was a dangerous thing," is quite evident. From what sources such opinions were gathered; from what dismal swamps such impressions sprang; from what clouds of gloom such fearful forebodings eminated; from what biased chambers of imagination such prejudices could be nurtured, we do not know. But touched with the spark of religious zeal, they burst forth into flame in the hands of such a man, and like firebrands hurled into combustible materials, started a conflagration widespread, but not lasting. He applied the match to the stubble-field, but the field burned over quickly ❧ ❧

Following such denunciations he says: " I am under moral obligations to break its oaths, and reveal its secrets to the world, that the institution of Masonry may come to an end. My refusal to meet with or support the institution is not sufficient; I must renounce fealty to the order, reveal its secrets, oppose its influence, and use my exertions to destroy it, or I am guilty of moral obligations." "I soon became convinced that the peace of society, the salvation of my country, the present and eternal happiness of my fellow men, and the glory of God, required the destruction of the institution. To accomplish this, I was confident but one effectual method could be adopted, and this was to make a full disclosure of its secrets."

Elder Bernard thus initiated his campaign. In this project he found little difficulty. He needed to associate with him men of like minds. He started out to find them. The atmosphere against Masonry was bitter and hostile. Furthermore, there was no organized efforts on the part of Masonry to intercept his efforts. His attitude, purpose, motives, and methods had been systematically worked out and announced.

About eighteen months were spent in thorough and systematic propaganda work. Elder Bernard began early to enlist the church, particularly his own denomination, in this frenzied crusade against Masonry. This is not to be wondered at. He found much that was responsive inside religious circles.

At least four ministers were together in the first lineup. They were Elders: James Cochran of Batavia; John C. Stearns of Paris; and Reuben Sanborn of Painted Post with their tireless leader, Bernard himself ❧ The first recorded Religious Anti-Masonic Conference held was that of July 28, 1828. It was assembled in the Baptist Church at Bethany Center, about six miles from Batavia. Resolutions were passed at this gathering, endorsing the movement and purpose, and vouching for the Christian character of Elder Bernard. Robert Earll, Jr., was the President, and Cephas A. Smith, the Secretary. The building in which this meeting was held is still in use and in excellent condition. It is one of the few structures yet in existence belonging to that fine type of church architecture. It was built in 1826.

In a convention of churches of his own denomination, held in Milton, N. Y., September 12 and 13, 1827, one year after the disappearance of Morgan, the following reasons were formulated " for disfellowshipping Free Masons:"

1. " Because Free Masonry professes to have its origin in and from God."
2. " Because it professes to correspond with and bear an affinity to the ancient Egyptian philosophy."
3. " Because it adopts a novel and unscriptural manner of instructing in the doctrines, promises, and consolations of the gospel, and draws its lessons of morality from stone hammers, mallets, chisels, and other working tools."

4. " Because it publishes to the world songs, etc., of such a contrarity of character as to serve the purpose of profanity, revelry, the worship of the true God and heathen deities."
5. " Because it pretends that its religion and morality are the same as those taught in the Bible."
6. " Because it unwarrantly and irreverently employs the name of Jehovah in the dedication of Masonic Halls."
7. " Because it dedicates lodges, chapters, etc., to the St. John and Zerubbabel."
8. " Because it authorizes the practice of religious rites, ceremonies, and observances, not commanded or countenanced in the New Testament."
9. " Because it imposes obligations of a moral and religious nature which can not be communicated to any other than Masons—not even to brethren in the Church of Christ."
10. " Because it amalgamates in its societies men of all religions, professing to believe in the existence of a Supreme Being of any description, thereby . . sapping the foundations of Christian Fellowship."
11. " Because it receives and adopts orders of Knighthood from Popery."

But let it be remembered that the above was not the universal mind of the church of that day. This was but a regional conference, and that of but one denomination, and the delegates were by far from being of one mind on the subject. Voices of better judgment were raised against such resolutions. A religious zeal without knowledge makes a poor showing oft times. Resolutions were adopted in local congregations requiring all Masons either to withdraw from Masonry or be expelled from the church.

This religious antipathy was bitter and lasting in many places. One local pastor of a Baptist Church, because of narrow-mindedness and bitterness on the part of his officers, withdrew from the denomination and entered another. A pious, but learned Deacon, believed and told the story, " that all along the route covered by Morgan and his abductors, who had cut Morgan's throat the following Spring, all the new-born lambs had red rings of blood around their necks. That Providence was being avenged." Fifty years afterwards, so the author was told by an eye witness, a zealous member of the congregation, after hearing the preacher preach a sermon against Masonry, came out of the cross-roads church and in a rage and defiant manner said: "I 'd rather have my right arm cut off, right up to the shoulder, than join the Masons." Instances are numerous in which local congregations split up on the Masonic issues, one party separating and organizing another church.

In a printed address of that time, by a

prominent officer in another denomination entitled, " A Candid Appeal to Professors of Religion," we read these statements: " My first reason why I find Masonry warring against religion is, that it prostitutes the Holy Scriptures to unholy purposes. The second reason that I shall name is the unchristian nature of its Masonic oaths. . . . . The third reason is the sacrilegious nature of Masonic ceremonies. . . . . My fourth reason is its religious assumption of titles to which it has no claim. . . . . My fifth reason is, that Masonry is considered a saving institution, and a religion of the performance of outward duties. . . . My sixth reason is that the institution is blasphemous."

Beriah Hotchkiss, the author of the above paragraph, was a Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church at LeRoy. He was also a part owner of the *LeRoy Gazette*, and most likely the chief editor. This periodical was early subsidized by Miller and Bernard for their propaganda enterprise. From the style and tone it can logically be concluded that he gave a strong, guiding hand to Bernard in the preparation for the series of articles, " An Address to All Honest Masons." The inference is clear that Mr. Hotchkiss was a Mason, though his name never appears among the Seceders and their conventions. It was at a Convention held in the Presbyterian Meeting House at LeRoy, where the " Declaration of Independence from the

Masonic Institution" was formally adopted. ¶ The question about a Mason breaking his Masonic oaths naturally came up in the minds of those of the same attitude as their leader, Elder Bernard. It became essential that some one should tinker with the scales of judgment to justify their conduct, and tone up public opinion in their favor. Beriah H. Hotchkiss of LeRoy, the author of the above six reasons for finding Masonry warring against religion, undertakes in another printed address to answer two great questions: "If the Masonic institution be so great an evil, why have good men united with and continued to countenance it so long? Already hungering for a repast like that promised in such a bill of fare, forgetting for the moment the history of our mother Eve, which is set forth as a timely warning to all her offspring . . . . and full of brilliant expectations, and keenly set for new and richer consolations; he enters, he bows before the altar reared within, and immolates himself in the strange abode." This is his answer to the first question above. "I can conceive of another reason which may induce the Christian to continue his connection with the fraternity; viz., a feeling of shame which prevents him from publishing openly (or by a silent renunciation, virtually) his folly and delusion to the world."

"Are Masons justifiable in breaking their Masonic oaths, and publishing the secrets of the order to the world?" He states three reasons for the affirmative answer. Also by prolonged and detached bits of sophistry, he endeavors to illuminate the same. He even quotes such an author and moralist as Paley.

"First," he writes, "promises are not binding where the performance is unlawful."

"Second, promises are not binding where a fulfillment of them would constitute a breach of prior and lawful engagements."

"Third, promises are not binding which are obtained by means of misrepresentation on the part of the promisee."

A fine bit of sophistry, indeed. But the apparent weakness in his travels of logic is that Masonic promises do not come under any of the categories above mentioned and quoted. But for Bernard's propaganda work it wrought wonders. For the leaven of such teachings was now at work in two score minds at least.

¶ This intense propaganda work was carried on by a series of articles called, "AN ADDRESS TO ALL HONEST MASONS." They consisted of eight numbers and were published in the *LeRoy Gazette* (LeRoy being about twelve miles from Batavia). They were signed by "A MASON," the author most likely being Elder Bernard himself ❧ ❧

On the whole the entire series is a vituperative attack on Free Masonry, a tale of misconstructions and misrepresentations, aimed to kindle fires in combustible minds, and with no concealed purposes.

An analysis of these articles reveals the orderly steps of the author as well as his one object—that of winning proselytes to his ranks. The first address attempted to show that Free Masonry originated in and was adapted to the primitive and dark ages of the world, and because of this could not apply itself to the present age. If it did apply itself, it had become perfectly useless. " Our forms," he states, " and ceremonies point conclusively to what is now emphatically called the dark ages."

The second address endeavors to show that the titles and names, dignity and respect, given to the various officers of Free Masonry all have a damaging influence and effect upon the principles of our free government. It states, " For heaven's sake, abandon an institution which has a direct tendency to contaminate the minds of almost all who unite themselves with it, and insensibly steals away that purity of sentiment, which alone can support a free and equal and happy government."

The third article asserts that as a general thing all secret societies are organized, maintained, and supported for the purpose of evading the laws and the overthrow of the governments. " No midnight meetings are necessary for societies who have nothing but honest and honorable objects to effect."

Masonry being a secret society . . . . free people should not suffer it to exist.

The fourth article states that secret societies in all countries and under all governments have never failed to create distrust among those who were uninitiated, and eventually turned over all their principles. That Masonry is the only such society that then had an existence—Satan's Kingdom already displayed." ❧ ❧

The fifth article brings forth a specific charge against Masonry, which is: " That the laws of Masonry in and of themselves, do authorize the taking of human life of a member of the fraternity guilty of divulging the secrets of Masonry." Of course this refers to the Morgan incident ❧ ❧

The sixth address says: " If this be true, (referring to the ' Morgan Affair ') it requires no great discernment to discover that we have a government within a government; that either the constitution and laws of our country or those of Free Masonry must give way, and that if our government is triumphant in the present conflict, Masonry must go down forever." ❧ ❧

The seventh article resumes the charges against Masonry in article five, and gives a summary of the author's views of the Morgan case ❧ ❧

The eighth article deals with the justification of the violation of Masonic oaths. The author soars to the pinnacle of his furious purpose in these words: " I now assert and will prove, that the obligations which are given in our Masonic Lodges to their members are not binding, morally, religiously, or legally—but on the contrary; it is a duty from which no honest Mason will shrink, to absolve himself from all allegiance to Masonry and expose to the scorn and contempt of all mankind, their unlawful and blasphemous obligations."

¶ With his propaganda work thus intensively and extensively carried on; with his chain-work of misrepresentations and false assumptions; with his vituperations so attractive to some minds; in a created hostile atmosphere against Masonry; using patriotic, humanitarian, and religious appeals; Elder Bernard succeeded in inculcating his serum into about forty individuals, who were ready to do his bidding. They decided to separate themselves from the Masonic institution, having been at one time members. They now styled themselves, " Seceding Masons."

Eighteen months were devoted to this initial step. And now to carry forth their work and fulfill their mission, as well as execute their purpose of destroying the institution of Free Masonry, they convened in session at LeRoy, New York, February 19, 1828.

Names of the original Seceding Masons, who having formally renounced Masonry, assembled in LeRoy, New York ❧ February 19 and 20, 1828, holding the first Anti-Masonic Convention.

Names	*Degrees Taken*
Platt S. Beech	Entered Apprentice
Henry Peck	” ”
David C. Miller	” ”
George W. Blodgett	Fellow Craft
Leonard B. Rose	Master Mason
George W. Harris	” ”
James Cochran	” ”
Jonathan Foster	” ”
Edmund Badger	” ”
Orasmus Bowers	” ”
Jason Grettan	” ”
James Gray	” ”
Benjamin Cooley	” ”
Enos Bachelder	” ”
A. E. Hutchins	” ”
John Tomlinson	” ”
Samuel D. Greene	” ”
Peletiah Dewey	” ”
Adam Richmond	” ”
David Webb	” ”
John Ammock	” ”
James Taylor	” ”
William W. Phelps	” ”
B. Bliss	” ”
Solomon Southwick	Mark Master
Miles B. Lampson	Royal Arch Mason
David Bernard	” ” ”
Richard Hollister	Knight of Red Cross

Anthony Cooley	Knight Templar and Illustrious Knight of Cross
Cephas A. Smith	” ” ”
Augustus H. Hascall	” ” ”
Hollis Pratt	” ” ”
Herbert A. Read	” ” ”
James Ballard	” ” ”
John Hascall	” ” ”
Rev. John G. Stearns	Degree not specified
Rev. Reuben Sanborn	” ” ”
Oliver Forward	” ” ”
Edward Giddins	” ” ”
Judge Hinman	” ” ”
William Barry	” ” ”

Note: . . . Of the above names, George W. Harris and Samuel D. Greene were previously expelled from the Batavia Lodge No. 433. Jason Grettan was also a former member of the Batavia Lodge. Edward Giddins, claimed to have been the keeper of the Magazine prison at Fort Niagara, is supposed to have been one of Miller's confederates, whom Miller claimed was a spy sent there by the Masons to purloin the copies. Giddins also later published the " Anti-Masonic Almanac." Solomon Southwick came from Albany, was formerly a member of the State Legislature, and later postmaster at Albany. With the exception of a few, the entire list was from Genesee County.

THE ANTI-MASONIC SOCIETY

ABOUT eighteen months after the disappearance of Morgan, during which time the excitement ran at a high degree, and a systematic campaign was being prepared by the " Seceding Masons " the first convention met in LeRoy, February 19, 1828. It was largely a Genesee County gathering of about forty disaffected Masons. At the opening session—" Elder Bernard of Warsaw addressed the throne of Grace. Leonard E. Rose of Castile, was called to the chair, and Elder David Bernard appointed Secretary. Voted: That the Rev. James Cochran of Batavia be requested to deliver an address to the convention upon the subject of the present meeting."

Having thus met this body constituted themselves into what has since been known as the " Anti-Masonic Society." These were "those who dared to stand in defense of their country's rights, at the hazard of Masonic vengeance, stepped forth and united with their fellow citizens in their noble attempts to kill the beast," so said Elder Bernard.

This Anti-Masonic Society held that the institution of Free Masonry depends upon its secrets inviolate; that the bursting asunder the bands of the fraternity by publishing its secrets to the world, was a duty it held to God and fellow men; and the motives attached to its proceedings were the welfare of society, the peace of mankind, and the glory of God. The purpose rang out clearly as the complete destruction of the institution. Its methods were to disclose all the secrets of Masonry to the world.

The work of this first convention was largely that of discussing the obligations of Free Masonry, and the preparation of such for disclosing to the public. " The Illustrations of William Morgan " were confirmed as being accurate. Some manuscripts were furnished by the delegates, to which were added the confirmation of reports for the obligations beyond those furnished from Morgan's revelations. In the evening the public was admitted for a brief period to see and hear Solomon Southwick of Albany, " whom they considered the champion of their liberties." Southwick attended by invitation. After his brief address, the delegates went into secret session to deliberate further.

Mr. Southwick was chosen chairman of the second day's conference. On this day a committee was appointed to draft a memorial to the United States Congress, " on the subject of the prostitution of the fortress of Niagara to the incarceration of William Morgan, a free citizen of the United States by persons calling themselves Free Masons."

Again it was resolved, " That a committee of fifteen be appointed to prepare the degrees of Free Masonry above that of Master, for publication." Among others on this committee was David C. Miller, Entered Apprentice, who was associated with William Morgan in the printing of the latter's manuscripts.

A committee was appointed " to draft a circular invitation to all Free Masons who are opposed to the institution of Free Masonry, to meet at this place on the fourth of July next." ❧ ❧

The following papers were requested to publish the proceedings of the convention:

Republican Advocate, Western Advertiser, Buffalo Patriot, Jamestown Journal, Western Star, LeRoy Gazette, Livingston Register, National Intelligencer, Georgetown Columbian, Anti-Masonic Inquirer, Seneca Farmer, Lake Light, Cazenovia Monitor, National Observer, Sandy Hill Sun, Palladium of Liberty, New Jersey Union Telegraph, Indians and Jefferson Whig.

The second Anti-Masonic Society convention was held again in LeRoy, March 6 and 7 of the same year. Delegates from twelve counties of Western New York were in attendance. General William Wadsworth of Livingston

County was appointed chairman. This convention's proceedings were largely reiterations and attacks. A number of resolutions were adopted and committees appointed. A committee was appointed to draft an address to the people of New York State expressing the views of the convention upon the subject of Free Masonry. Also to present a memorial to Congress upon the subject of the incarceration of a citizen in a Fortress of United States, and praying for an inquiry into same. A committee of Correspondence and Publication was appointed, and on said committee was one " Thurlow Weed of the village of Rochester." This resolution was adopted: " Resolved that those Masons who have disclosed the horrid obligations that bind the fraternity together deserve the warmest gratitude of their fellow citizens." A memorial was drafted to the State Legislature on the subject of unlawful oaths. Steps were taken for the raising of funds necessary to carry on the outlined work and to defray the expenses already incurred in the " investigation of Masonic outrages."

At an adjourned meeting of the convention of Seceding Masons, held in LeRoy, July 5, 1828, "The Declaration of Independence from the Masonic Institution " was adopted. Eighteen charges were preferred against Free Masonry, most of which were repetitions or restatements of former charges. The following new ones were brought out:

" It exercises jurisdiction over the persons and lives of citizens of the republic.

" It arrogates to itself the right of punishing its members for offences unknown to the laws of this or any other nation.

" It requires the concealment of crime, and protects the guilty from punishment.

" It encourages the commission of crime, by affording to the guilty facilities of escape.

" It affords opportunities for the corrupt and designing to form plans against the government, and the lives and characters of individuals ❧ ❧

" It creates odious aristocracies by its obligations to support the interests of its members to the exclusion of others of equal qualifications ❧ ❧

" It promotes habits of idleness and intemperance by its members neglecting their business to attend its meetings and drink its libations ❧ ❧

" It accumulates funds at the expense of indigent persons, and to the distress of their families, too often to be dissipated in rioting and pleasure and its senseless ceremonies and exhibitions ❧ ❧

" It contracts the sympathies of the human heart to all the unfortunate, by confining its charities to its own members; and promotes the interest of a few at the expense of the many ❧ ❧

" An institution thus fraught with so many and great evils is dangerous to our government and the safety of our citizens, and is unfit to exist among a free people. We, therefore, believing it our duty we owe to our God, our country, and to posterity, resolve to expose its mystery, wickedness, and tendency to public view—and we exhort all citizens who have a love of country, and a veneration for its laws, a spirit of our holy religion, and a regard for the welfare of mankind, to aid us in the cause which we have espoused—and appealing to Almighty God for the rectitude of our motives, we solemnly absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the Masonic institution, and declare ourselves free and independent; and in support of the resolutions, our government and laws, and the safety of individuals against the usurpations of all secret societies and open force, and against the vengeance of the Masonic institution, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

Names of the Signers of " The Declaration of Independence from the Masonic Institution," Adopted at LeRoy, New York, July 4, 1828. The Convention was held in the Presbyterian Church with Solomon Southwick acting as Chairman, and David Bernard as Intimate Secretary:

Solomon Southwick, Albany, N. Y.; David Bernard, Warsaw, N. Y.; W. W. Phelps, Canandaigua; Isaac B. Batnum, Perrington;

Cephas A. Smith, LeRoy; J. VanValkenburgh, Prattsburgh; Platt S. Beach, Stafford; Elam Badger, Cazenovia; Joseph Hart, Albion; Kneeland Townsend, Lewiston; Anthony Cooley, LeRoy; John G. Stearns, Paris; Reuben Winchell, Lockport; Augustus P. Hascall, LeRoy; Noble D. Strong, Auburn; John Hascall, LeRoy; Robert Earl, Attica; James Ballard, LeRoy; Leonard B. Rose, Castile; Timothy C. Strong, Albion; William Waggoner, Lebanon; John Aumock, LeRoy; Herbert A. Read, LeRoy; W. Robinson, Springwater; Lemuel Cook, Lewiston; Jesse Babcock, Springwater; James Gray, LeRoy; Elijah Gray, LeRoy; William Howe, Gorham; Samuel Pierce, Ridgeway; Adam Richmond, LeRoy; George W. Harris, Batavia; Benjamin Cooley, Stafford; John Joslen, Wheatland; A. F. Albright, Wheatland; Fayette Cross, Wheatland; Elias Cooley, LeRoy; Olney F. Rice, Gorham; Warren Kneeland, Sempronius; Jabez A. Beebe, Hinsdale; Burroughs Holmes, Claredon; Noah B. Denton, Covington; Truman J. Wield, Covington; Edward Giddins, Rochester; Abram Cherry, Rochester; Richard Hollister, LeRoy; Amos E. Hutchins, LeRoy; Henry Conkling, Covington; Padcall D. Webb, LeRoy; Daniel Rowley; Jonathan K. Barlow, Bethany; Mills Averill, Bethany; Noah Ingersoll, Albion; Chapman Hawley, Niagara County; Auren Daball, Prattsburgh; Fredrick C. Farnam, Attica; Joel Bradner, Barre; Jonathan K. Foster, Batavia; Seth M. Gates, LeRoy; David Reed, Hopewell; Willard Smith, Adams, Jefferson County; Solomon Barker, Gates; Orson Nicholson, Albion, Orleans County; J. K. Brown, Barre; Enos Bachelder, LeRoy; Stephen Robinson, Springwater; Robert McKely, Clarence; John Law, LeRoy; Isaac S. Fitch, Jamestown; Hiram Cornell, Jamestown; Samuel Ledyard, Pultneyville; John Smith, Prattsburgh; Benjamin F. Welles, Pultney; Anson Hinman, Pike, Allegany County; Samuel D. Greene, Batavia; Chester Coe, Bennington; Theodore Hooker, Duchess County; Elijah Northup, Pine Plains, Duchess County; Reuben Sanborn, Painted Post; Jarvis Swift, Auburn; David Snow, Covington; John Tomlinson, Stafford; Nathan M. Mann, Wales, Erie County; Nathan Townsend, Batavia; Andrew Couse, Cazenovia; Phlegmoncy Horton, Cazenovia; Russel Waters, Cazenovia; W. J. Edson, Batavia; David C. Miller; James Rolfe, Elba; George W. Blodgett, LeRoy; Uriah Slayton, LeRoy; Martin Flint, Vermont; Darius Sprague, Vermont; Joseph Cochran, Vermont; Orcutt Hyde, Vermont; William Hyde, Vermont; Phinehas Smith, Vermont; Lund Tarbox, Vermont; Hollis Platt, LeRoy; Norman Bently, Guilford.

This " Declaration " thus singularly prefaced, and with somewhat familiar phraseology, was adopted and signed by one and three " Seceding Masons." Most of these were from the State of New York, and several from Vermont. Solomon Southwick of Albany was president, and David Bernard was clerk. Six of the signers were from Batavia, among whom were David C. Miller, the printer, and George Harris, who afterwards married Mrs. Morgan. We also find again the name of Thurlow Weed from Rochester.

About this convention the Secretary made this record: " These men formed a convention, which for talents and respectability, for real worth and standing in community, is rarely equalled in conventional or deliberative bodies. There are of those whose names appear above, three judges of county courts, seven ministers of the gospel in regular standing in their respective churches, three practicing attorneys at law, two physicians, and four editors of newspapers, besides several justices of the peace and postmasters. They are scattered throughout the western part of the State of New York, and many of them are extensively known. They need not even this feeble tribute of respect of the compiler to establish or promulgate their characters. The beneficial effects of the doings of that convention will be experienced and duly appreciated when their calumniators shall quietly repose with the institution of Free Masonry in the tomb of forgetfulness."

A poetic prophecy not yet fulfilled.

On the evening of July 4, at this convention, Herbert A. Reed, Esq., delivered an oration, to a reported audience of ten thousand people.

The following is an extract of that address:

" The event we celebrate is the birthday of a nation . . . We are assembled to contemplate this stupendous work and lay the foundation for the entire overthrow of the Masonic institution . . . which has proudly bid defiance to the public opinion—which has exulted in its own damning deeds, and insulted the majesty of the laws. . . The book of her mysteries will be opened . . . her hidden abominations exposed . . . her profane altar will be overthrown . . . her noisy revels will no longer greet our ears . . . her covers will be opened to the gaze of the uninitiated; for her iniquities have called for retributive justice."

A bill authorizing the employment of counsel for the investigation of facts relative to the abduction of William Morgan, was passed by a vote of sixty-six to forty-four, in the State Legislature, April 12, 1829. This bill has been referred to as the " offspring of the Lieutenant Governor." Another bill was presented, praying " that a law be passed, declaring that oaths administered by others than public officers under the laws are illegal." The bill was never passed. The State Legislature was in turmoil for many weeks over the Morgan excitement and the memorials presented by the Anti-Masonic Society. It is gratifying to know that there were some level headed members present. The following is a statement in a speech by Mr. Wardell, in the Legislature: " There are no principles of Free Masonry which require a man to act contrary to the dictates of morality and religion, and to run counter to the principles of good order."

On March 24, 1828, the Hon. John Crary made a stirring speech in the Senate against the institution of Free Masonry. The following is taken from that speech:

" Free Masonry has been suffered to exist . . . and addressing itself to the cupidity, the ambition, the vanity, or the curiosity of individuals, it has gone on increasing like the fame of the classic poet, until it has become widespread in its influence, extended in its operations; and in its multiplied mystic ramifications, it has become interwoven with the very frame and fabric of society, and secretly connected with all our institutions . . . In every public procession we have seen their flaunting banners, their muslin robes, and mimic clowns. In the executive of the State, we have beheld a man (referring to Governor Clinton, a prominent Mason), holding the highest office in the order, bound to his brethren by secret ties of whose strength and character we knew nothing . . . Hence it is that they, (Free Masons), are to be found at the head of every party; that whatever party prevails, the affairs of the government may be conducted by Free Masons, which would not be the case if they were known to belong to any particular party. It is against this gigantic power, with all its trappings that we are to contend. It is true that we are neither armed nor disciplined for the battle, but let us not despair, we have with us the moral courage, the physical power, and the force of principle; and it is with pleasure that I add, the best men of every day renouncing Free Masonry and rallying around our standard. With such aid, although the contest may be long, the victory must be certain."

The fourth Anti-Masonic Society convention was held " at the Baptist Church in the village of Utica, N. Y., August 4, 5, and 6, 1828. Prayer by Deacon Jonathan Olmstead, the Hon. James Hawkes of the County of Otsego, was chosen president, and Thomas C. Green of Saratoga County, and Seth Abbey of Jefferson County were chosen secretaries. The matter of preparing further the secrets and obligations of Free Masonry was taken up and steps taken and plans made for the publication of same.

A committee was appointed " to report what measures ought to be adopted to counteract the influence and destroy the existence of Masonic societies." It was recommended that steps be taken to establish free presses in the several countries; " to fearlessly publish the whole truth, in violation to the principles, obligations, and tendency of speculative Masonry." ❧ ❧

" That it is expedient for the convention in pursuit of the good objects to be accomplished, wholly to disregard the two great political parties that at this time distract this state of the Union, in the choice of candidates for office; and to nominate Anti-Masonic candidates for Governor and Lieutenant Governor." In carrying out this resolution the convention nominated Francis Granger, of Ontario County, as a candidate for Governor of the State, and John Clary, of the County of Washington, for the office of Lieutenant Governor ❧ ❧

Resolved, " That we will not give our suffrages to any member of the Masonic fraternity who adheres to the institution, or acknowledges the binding force of their wicked and blasphemous obligations; nor in any manner directly or indirectly promote their election to any office or place of public trust."

Resolved: " That those members of the institution who have courageously broken the shackles of Masonry, and thus restored themselves to the full enjoyment of the rights of freemen, and set an example highly worthy of imitation, have entitled themselves to the approbation of their fellow citizens."

Resolved: " That this convention feel a deep sense of the gratitude due to those resolute men who have torn the covering from Free Masonry, and exposed her deformity and vileness." ❧ ❧

In addition to the above resolutions, an address for the public was ordered prepared, the closing sentences being these:

" Public sentiment has pointed to these gentlemen (referring to the nominees for Governor and Lieutenant Governor) as our ablest champions; and we take pride in presenting them to you as candidates for your suffrage, to fill the highest offices within your gift as citizens of the State. Go to the polls then, fellow citizens; exercise that power for the destruction of the Masonic institution which the constitution and laws have put into your hands; and in the performance of that duty remember the solemn warning of the father of our country, to " beware of all secret self-created societies."

SOME THUNDERBOLTS FROM THE ANTI-MASONIC ORATORS

" With what feelings of abhorrence should we view a legal contract where life was the penalty of a failure in its fulfillment; or would a church be fellowshipped in a community whose members are required to covenant, upon pain of the most barbarous and inhuman death from the hands of their brethren, that they would faithfully observe all commands and ordinances." (B. B. Hotchkiss, on " The Unchristian Nature of Masonic Oaths.")

" If at first we suspected her purity; we know now that she is filthy, disgusting, and full of unsoundness—stripped by her own votaries of all her borrowed vestments of pretended holiness, she at last stands before us naked and exposed, in all her native pollution and deformity." (From speech of T. F. Talbot, Esq., Utica, N. Y., Aug. 4, 1828.)

"No matter if a Masonic juror has taken an oath 'true verdict to find, according to evidence,' he has taken a Masonic obligation paramount to his civil one, and of such horrid import, to shield the culprit whether right or wrong; but should this fail him, he gives the grand hailing sign to the executive and the sword of justice is averted." (From oration of Herbert A. Reed, Esq., LeRoy, N. Y., July 4, 1828.)

"She lifts up her voice to unhallowed prayer for a blessing on her assemblies, refusing to acknowledge the name of the only Mediator. She teaches per pupil that walking on the square and worthily wearing the white apron, the emblem of innocence, they shall have admission into the grand lodge above. She teaches to circumscribe our passions with the compass; and she does not, like Christianity, regard the heart. She teaches a selfish love for the brethren instead of an enlarged philanthropy to the human race; and in her degrees, hatred to her enemies is inoculated, which is a doctrine not of Christ." (From an "Address to the citizens of the State of New York, Aug. 5, 1828.")

The Anti-Masonic Political Party had a

lively but brief existence. The fiery leaders soon gathered a lively following. Shallow, narrow-minded preachers; emotional under-truth-nourished church officers; disgruntled politicians; disappointed office-seekers flung the banners and hooted the loudest. Their noise, froth, and frenzy drew the crowds. Besmirched politicians became regenerated and renewed over night during this revival of Anti-Masonic Grace. They offered themselves on the nation's Altars to save the young republic's life, and forever crush the institution of Masonry. The sad spectacle of the gullible crowds, cheering and supporting them is indeed pathetic.

In 1828 this party polled thirty-three thousand votes. In 1829 it polled seventy-thousand, and the following year one hundred and twenty thousand votes. Its strongest hold was in New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Ohio, and Massachusetts. The New Political broom undertook to sweep the floors clean. Not only the Masons, but those who sympathized with Masons, and those who would not openly denounce Free Masonry, were to be swept off platforms and out of the political arenas and influence ❧ ❧

In 1832 it organized itself on national lines to defeat both of the leading political parties. It nominated a Presidential ticket against Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay, both of whom were Free Masons and Past Masters. William Writ was their nominee for President.

The campaigns were known for their vituperation and bitterness. The one waged in Pennsylvania was doubtless the most bitter in all its history.

The following is a stanza from one of its campaign songs, set to the tune of " Auld Lang Syne."

" If aught on earth can men engage,
If aught can make us free,
'T is one successful war to wage
Against Free Masonry.
The Mason's dark design we know,
The Mason's bloody grip and sign,
We'll lend a hand to blot from earth
The Mason's bloody shrine."

In the Presidential election it carried but one state, Vermont. It did succeed in electing William H. Seward as State Senator in New York. In 1828 Millard Fillmore was elected a member of the State Lesiglature, and in 1835 the Anti-Masons carried the Gubernatorial Campaign in Pennsylvania and elected Joseph Ritner as Governor. Following this terrific blow, delivered by the intelligent and saner masses of voters, leaders slunk off into their burrows, and their deluded and benighted followers broke ranks, and the party dwindled out of existence.

RENEGADE MASONS

AFTER this party's defeat and extinction, the tirade against Free Masonry was carried on for a number of years by another set. It was a type of so-called "Renegade Masons." Following its defeat, low-grade politicians abandoned its hobby ❧ The better class of men began to withdraw themselves from an active participation in further tirade.

"The noisy stump orators who had suddenly sprung up like so many brainless mushrooms, received their quietus," from the sober and thinking public. But Anti-Masonry found new keepers. Traveling mendicants immediately sprung up, "who jointly and severally, undertook to wield it for the accomplishment of their nefarious ends." Among these mendicants were those who wore the ministerial garb to sanctify their manner and purpose in pious fraud. To quote an authority of three-quarters of a century ago, the picture is well portrayed ❧ ❧

"There sprung up a set of little, dirty, lazy, sapheaded, unprincipled, renegade Masons, who, not having succeeded in working themselves into public employment, determined to make merchandise of their treachery, and thus put money in their purses. This little band of contemptible parasites, unwittingly did more to put to shame the cause of Anti-Masonry than any other overt act of individuals. Had these vagabonds understood human nature a little better and taken time by the forelock, they might, indeed, have made fortunes by conferring degrees and lecturing on Masonry; but they did not commence their farcial exhibitions, until the people had become tired of the subject, tired of the excitement, and hence these traveling impostors first excited the ridicule, and next the contempt and scorn of all decent men."

One of these renegade Masons put on his farcial exhibitions in a village within fifteen miles of Batavia, years after the episode. He secured an eccentric village character, upon whom he pretended to work the degrees of Masonry before a crowd of people. Scorn and contempt were heaped upon his slanting brow ❧ ❧

In another part of the state, a self-styled minister and mendicant gave public exhibitions in a village for several weeks. His indecent morals and manners were such that a group of decent-loving citizens escorted him out of the country, as a reward of his doings.

¶ It may be possible that the origin of many of Clandestine Lodges may be traced to these impostors ❧ ❧

Thus political Anti-Masonry ere long died and found its grave in its own original falsehoods and corruption. The echoes of its flighty oratory soon died away in the distance. Its home-made lightings, created out of vituperations, no longer flashed before the public gaze. Its false logic in time became apparent to all thoughtful and honest thinkers. Its fiery seal, without true knowledge, burned out its household. Its false assumptions that Free Masonry could not exist within a free republic vanished like a morning fog before the sunrise. Its egotistical claims that it alone could be trusted to guard, guide, and govern this nation were soon driven to the four corners of the earth. Its prerogatives of having the sole claim upon the public mind were quickly wrested from the weak band. Its endeavor to enlist the pious service of the Church in its crusade against its self-created foe received but a feeble response. The Church had its equilibrium and poise in saner minds. Its attempt to subsidize the free press for its propaganda work totally failed. The press had more important matters to print. Its hope to dominate legislative bodies in securing Anti-Masonic legislation suffered a total eclipse. Saner minds prevented legislative wheels from turning backwards. Its arm that grasped at the political dominance of our nation became paralyzed. True Masonry proved itself invulnerable against such attacks.

¶ As the clouds rolled by, one by one the enlisted began to step back into the humble walks of quiet life. What became of its leader we do not know. Against him and his followers Masonry organized no persecution. Neither are bitterness and ill-will fostered in its heart. For them it has the mantle of sweet charity. Masonry has lived, and will always live, because of its inherent life and principles, which alone give the institution the right to live in, and help build a free republic.

In Batavia, where the storm first broke, and where the " loyal seventy-two " Masons held the fort for all Masonry, there is today a prosperous Lodge of upwards of seven hundred strong. In Warsaw, the home of Bernard, Masonry is four hundred strong. In LeRoy, the meeting place of the early conventions, Masonry is the strongest in its history. The last great convention was held in Utica. There the great Masonic Home of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York is now located. Free Masonry lives, hopes, prays and labors toward that goal:

> " When the war-drum throbs no longer,
> And the battle flags are furled;
> In the parliament of man,
> The Federation of the world."

SO HERE THEN ENDETH THE
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